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Photo by Man Ray, courtesy Harpers Bazaar

VIRGINIA WOOLF

"The subject of 'The Years' is our universal experience of time, the feeling that it goes faster as we grow older; and the quality which this experience gives to our awareness of life"... *(See page 5)*

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Writer in Hollywood

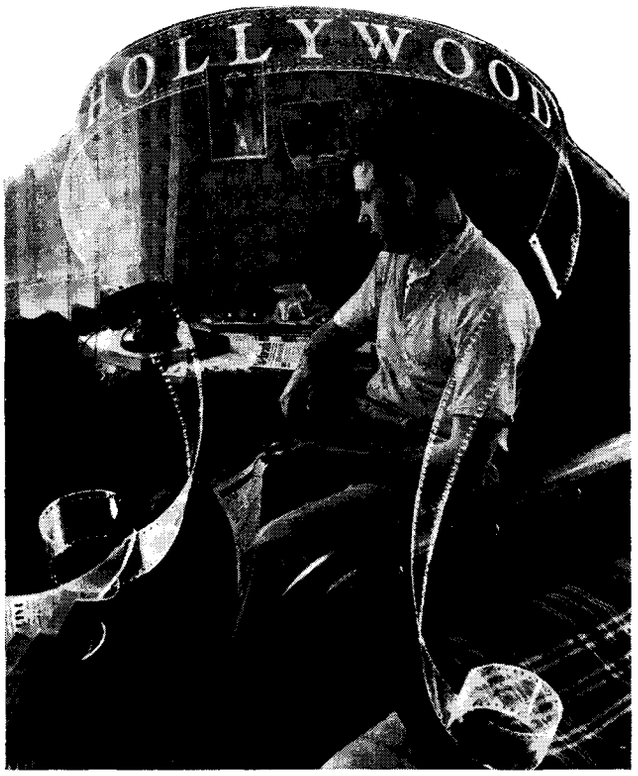
BY PHIL STONG

ANY writer who has made the slightest profession of serious intention and effort becomes suspect at once when he sets foot on the silly scenery of Pasadena, California; that scenery which a friend once told me was all made by tired little needlewomen in Jersey City. There are worn and tattered palms, leprous eucalypti, mattresses of pale petunias, and such other vegetation as makes one feel that if only God can make a tree He should take a rest and get hold of Himself.

It is not reasonable for a writer to make five hundred or a thousand or two thousand dollars a week, the folks back home, companions and critics, are saying, and good old So-and-so has sold himself up the river instead of 'tending to his proper cotton fields back here under the blazing sun. They are frequently correct; also they are frequently incorrect.

Two thousand dollars a week is not necessarily a scarlet letter. It is just as possible to do serious work on two thousand dollars a week as it is to do serious work on a ten-cent beer and free potato chips. The rewards of work in motion pictures are frequently fantastic as compared with the rewards for equivalent or superior endeavors in other literary fields but that doesn't mean, *per se*, that the motion picture work is contemptible. I suppose that Laurence Stallings or Oliver Garrett or Marc Connelly can earn more in a year in Hollywood than one of our two or three great American poets, Edwin Arlington Robinson, earned in his lifetime—certainly more than Thomas Chatterton ever dreamed of having. But their work is good in each case.

What has that to do with a legitimate work seriously attempted so long as the work and the effort truly fall into the dimensions suggested? No thoughtful person who has been articulate within twenty years has questioned the suitability of motion pictures as a medium of narrative expression. "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" appeared at least sixteen years ago and "Broken Blossoms" a few years sooner or later. The German "Siegfried" and the Russian "Potemkin" appeared somewhat later and since then there have been dozens of pictures—as motion pictures reached a stage of development comparable, sketchily, to the development of the English novel in later Georgian times—where they are sufficiently durable to wipe the smiles off of any critical face.



PROMISED LAND
Photo by Will Connell, from "In Pictures: a Hollywood Satire," to be published April 28 by Morrow.

There is no question about the validity of motion pictures as an expression, so that it is not puzzling but amusing to see writers go to Hollywood shamefaced and apologetic and to hear "YAHHH!" follow the train; the utterance of friends and admirers who are hurt by the idea of unattainable hundreds a week and who sublimate this impulse with the assumption that the writer's adventure is nothing but a swift and profitable prostitution.

If this postulate were tenable there would be nothing in Hollywood at this time. Writers make Hollywood, of course. The directors—the good ones—are half writers, or more than half, themselves. They know structure, setting, characterization, development, and suspense, and they set one's story to what is called the tempo, or pace, or rhythm of their medium so that the author's adaptation of life to narrative, perhaps dealing with years, becomes minutes in the director's adaptation of long prose narrative to film.

Dialogue is cut to realistic brevity. Anyone who says more than four lines, ordinarily, is shot and butchered, as he should be in real life. Detailed characterization is useless, of course, because that will be visually represented on the screen—Gaynor or McLaglen or Mickey Mouse.

Setting is curiously emphasized and it is probable that writers will take some lessons from this, by and by. The use of the picture to make the mood is worked hard and successfully. The movies are young enough to consider objections to what is called the "pathetic fallacy" very lightly and they are right. The pathetic fallacy is a decent and frequently effective trick and if it were defined to any good cameraman with a suggestion that he give it up on academic grounds the results would be fearful. Try to tell Andrews that he can't use a fluffily clouded sky to set a wistful and defeatist love scene, or Jo Valentine that he can't contrast a driving rain against his heroine's sudden and exuberant happiness!

There are some evident tricks that any writer can learn from motion picture development and photography. The technical tricks are simple and transparent. The tiny device of switching scenes, which writers employ by simply using a new chapter title, a section number, or asterisks, becomes a "cut," a "lap dissolve," a "dissolve," or a "wipe," or "iris" or some other fool tag in movies. All of these things define ways of dropping one scene

Next Week

MIDDLETOWN IN TRANSITION
By ROBERT LYND AND HELEN MERRELL LYND
Reviewed by Duncan Aikman

BUCKSKIN BREECHES
By PHIL STONG
Reviewed by Paul Engle

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or one unit of action and melting, sliding, or cutting into another. They have certain dramatic integrities, as methods, but not enough to justify the numerous terms.

Reluctantly one admits that pictures do have "pace." They claim to have pace, rhythm, tempo, and montage, but they don't have all those things. But they know how to speed an ordinary narrative to a "pace" where a barely normal audience will not become impatient with the suspense and action of a story. They don't, of course, know what *montage* means except in a general sense, if at all. It is the bread and butter of anyone who makes his living by dramatic writing. It means "mounting"—not the evident and necessary mounting of suspense but the heightening of action, intellectual or physical, in terms of necessary external circumstances which accompany the development of a story.

That is what they are struggling for as narrators and Heaven help them. They have done so well in such a short time! They use foolish and empty words and phrases and there aren't over a dozen people out there who know what they are trying to do, but they stagger along, pragmatists and desperate opportunists at the same time, and since they have a new medium that is very popular I guess they'll make it. There has been a long debate about whether the Hero makes the Occasion or vice versa.

There are three kinds of writers in Hollywood—perhaps more, but the general groups are about the same. The studio writers are not writers, primarily, but artisans. They carefully study the techniques of motion picture production and carefully memorize the devices of motion picture narration as they have succeeded or failed. The work is as honest as that of a plumber or a surgeon. Frances Marion, Jules Furthmann, Browne Holmes, Sonya Levien, Sam Mintz, and a dozen others of less importance compose pictures with the calm assurance of a carpenter nailing one board to another. The audience is to be moved either to pathos or humor—bring the crowbar.

They know the way that scenes and constructions have been effectively operative. This is not to say that they do not invent, but that they chiefly follow the rules of thumb that have been tried and found adequate. Anyone who chooses to be patronizing about these rules or precepts should remember that the English sonnet, stupidly and reasonlessly enough, consists of fourteen lines—two quatrains and a sestet, arbitrarily rhymed. I don't know of any rule so rigid that obtains over the artisans of motion picture writing.

Contract writers, such as I, are negligible. We go out to make some quick money or to protect what we consider dramatic ideas in a story which has been purchased for adaptation to motion pictures. We take a short course in the tempo of the motion picture, as compared with the novel and the stage, and we often come back promptly to the next novel. Ordinarily our work is largely to furnish additional incident or dialogue to a trained screen writer.

Often, but not always. Our Class Three includes some of the best writers in America and many of the better ones, usually competent in several media, who are honestly and artistically interested in the possibilities of expression in motion pictures. They are not only working seriously with the very adequate facilities for narration already developed in what is no longer by any means an "infant" art but they are experimenting with new methods, as playwrights are still experimenting with playwriting and novelists with the form of the novel.

Anyone who classes the work of Oliver Garrett, John Lawson, Paul Green, Laurence Stallings, Dudley Nichols, Ben Hecht, Charles MacArthur, and so on under the supercilious generic of "moom-pitcher" is either antiquated in his smart-aleckness or is insensitive to some of the most important literature of the time. These are serious workers who show a proper respect for their considerable talents by using them to the fullest to produce new effects in an established art form.

Their researches and efforts have been so successful that within the comparatively brief course of my own adventures in motion pictures there has been a tremendous change in the Hollywood attitude toward stories and writers. The caste system, which used to send writers east from Pasadena grinding their teeth, has been largely revised in the writer's favor. There was an instance five years ago when a writer was assigned to the studio fire department for the last weeks of his contract to impress him with his unimportance. I spent the last two weeks of a contract, after completing my first and most successful assignment, without an office and with nothing to do in it. For the majority of his contract period in pictures the late Thorne Smith was simply ignored by everyone in the executive departments.

This was the time when Samuel Hoffenstein is reputed to have said something about as follows to a group of colleagues, "They take us away from our work, they get us out here, they ruin our ideas, they butcher our stories, they insult us, and what do we get out of it all? Nothing but a fortune."

Even three years ago an agent with what are horribly called "properties," such as Sinclair Lewis, Somerset Maugham, Thorne Smith, William Seabrook—over two hundred in all—sent her assistant to Hollywood where he was pushed around from one assistant story editor to another and told to submit whatever he had to sell and it would be considered in due time. Last spring when he made his annual or semiannual visit he found his hotel mail-box crowded with phone numbers to call, requests for appointments, and "Hello, old boy!" notes from producers, supervisors, directors, and story editors. The "moom-pitcher" people are learning that, though those stars who are "box office" can carry off a thin story, they fare much better with the efforts of serious and capable authors, and the authors are respected accordingly.

Even the fond parent of "State Fair" has never been silly enough to think of that film, which followed the dramatic structure of the novel quite closely, in terms of achievements such as "Cavalcade" or "The Informer." The script was far better than most, however, the ideas of the original story were respected and recognized by a very great director and the resulting net profit was startling for

(*Continued on page* 14)

Beech Trees

By SISTER M. MADELEVA

I PASSED a wood of beech trees yesterday
And I am shaken with its beauty yet.
Why should my breath catch and my eyes be wet
Because a hundred trees some yards away
Know simply how to dress in simple gray,
Are poised beyond the need of epithet
And beautiful past power to forget?
I dare not think how they will look in May.

They wore illustrious yellow in the fall.
Their beauty is no thing at which they guess.
And when they put on green, and when they carry
Fans open in sun or folded small,
I'll look through tears at ultimate loveliness:
Beeches in May, beeches in February.

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Time and the Senses

THE YEARS. By Virginia Woolf. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE STEVENS

PICK up "The Years," thumb over its 435 pages, glance at the series of dates which are its chapter headings—from "1880" to "Present Day"—and you will inevitably think of "The Forsyte Saga" and of "Cavalcade"; of the Boer War, the Jubilee, the *Titanic*, the World War, and the General Strike; of the scores of English families who have lived through these events in scores of English novels, one generation following another through an endless procession of births, marriages, and funerals. Begin to read "The Years," and you will find that Virginia Woolf has left nearly all of this familiar material out. There are mentions of the death of Parnell and the death of Edward VII; there is one scene, beautifully written, of an air-raid over London; otherwise history is taken for granted, and stays in the background behind the personalities of the novel and their relationships.

The world of "The Years" is a woman's world. It is made up of inner life and memory, of intuitions and oblique perceptions. The Pargiters, whom we follow from childhood to old age, are essentially like all other large Victorian families; but this too is taken for granted. We see them grow up, marry, and have children; or grow up and not marry—Eleanor, because she was the oldest, and it was assumed that she would not leave her father; Edward, because the girl he loved married some one else. These and the others—Delia, who felt oppressed at home and married into the Irish gentry; Rose, the feminist who broke windows and went proudly to prison; their nephew, North, who served in the war, farmed in South Africa, and returned bewildered to a London that had changed—all these are characters familiar to us from other novels. But in "The Years" they are not "characters" at all, in the customary sense of fiction; they are personalities, rather; we do not know Eleanor or North as we know Soames Forsyte; but we do know how it feels to be Eleanor or North.

We know because the story is told through their own memories and their own consciousness. Very little of it, however, is "stream of consciousness"; we recognize Jacob's Room but it has been redecorated. "The Years" is straightforwardly written; it is neither cryptic, like "Orlando," nor obscure, like "The Waves." Its quality can be conveyed better by quotation than by description.

> Her past seemed to be rising above her present. . . . They talked as if they were speaking of people who were real, but not real in the way in which she felt herself to be real. It puzzled her; it made her feel that she was two different people at the same time; that she was living at two different times at the same moment. She was a little girl wearing a pink frock; and here she was in this room, now.

SYMBOL OF "THE YEARS"
Big Ben: from "London" by E. O. Hoppé

This sense of time and reality is Virginia Woolf's constant preoccupation. The subject of "The Years" is our universal experience of time, the feeling that it goes faster as we grow older; and the quality which this experience gives to our awareness of life. The present and the past exist together, the one in consciousness, the other in memory. At any moment the past can become more acute, more poignant than the present, because consciousness moves along the dimension of time, but memory can make time stand still. Trivial scenes which make little impression on the present consciousness will rise unexpectedly into memory, distinct in outline, transfigured by hidden emotional associations. Just such scenes, in discontinuous succession, make up the texture of "The Years." It is characteristic that, when Eleanor goes to a committee meeting, we hear the tones of all the voices, we know what Eleanor thinks of her committee members, we see and even smell the room; but we do not find out the purpose of the meeting. Always our imaginations and our senses are kept alive to the feel of things: horses trotting on hot asphalt, fog beyond a window-pane, spring in the country after a night's journey from London.

The effect of this is sometimes static. There are few "big scenes." There is no story told, though there are several between the lines. But to pursue these points is to criticize Mrs. Woolf for what she is not trying to do. Generations of novelists have taught us to expect fiction to convey concrete experience. "The Years," an expression of abstract experience, is one of Mrs. Woolf's most brilliant achievements, written with imagination that is luminous and evocative.

Stripped for Action

BEAT TO QUARTERS. By C. S. Forester. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by KENNETH P. KEMPTON

LOOKING back at recent historical novels of the bulkier sort, one sometimes wonders whether, without libraries, the author could have made a story. Not so here. Mr. Forester has followed "The Gun" and "The General" with another book that proves him a narrative craftsman in his own right. If, indeed, he alters the record a bit now and then, nobody but the nasty neat will care. His main facts are sound, his atmosphere is authentic, and it is something beyond historical truth that he is after.

"Beat to Quarters" is a chapter in the life of one Captain Hornblower, commander of His Britannic Majesty's 36-gun frigate *Lydia*. With England still at war with Spain and Bonaparte already looming over Europe, sealed orders send this man round the Horn and into the Great South Sea to join forces with a Central American rebel, open trade routes to the Main, and defeat the 50-gun *Natividad* stationed off Panama. Having captured that ship-of-the-line and turned her over to the rebel, Hornblower learns belatedly of the peace and the alliance against Napoleon, and is forced into a more desperate engagement with the tall ship he has once subdued, with the madman El Supremo whom his earlier orders had bidden him befriend. There is a girl in the story, and no *papier-mâché* heroine at that.

It may sound tame, but it is not. This is the work of a man who knows his period but will never let it stand between him and his greater knowledge of human nature. This Hornblower is roundly done: a man approaching middle age, intensely shy, poor at a time when wealth was a prerequisite to success in the British Navy, loyal to his profession rather than his sovereign, bewildered equally by international politics and the petty details of naval routine, but an unbeatable fighter and guardian of his ship and his men. His rubber of whist with midshipmen while lying in wait for the *Natividad* is not easily forgotten. The second engagement, fought over three days and five chapters, never for one sentence lets you down.

The book may have its soft spots. El Supremo is cleverly drawn, but the maniacal note seems discordant, too easy, in this realistic romance. The end is hurried, and Hornblower the hesitant lover (his plump Maria awaits him at home) comes close to a ludicrous effect unintended. Still and all, it is a treat to get hold of something dextrous and lithe and stripped for action—something that for the most part is just a hell of a good story.

Kenneth P. Kempton is the author of "Old Man Greenlaw" and other novels.

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Language, Loose and Low

A DICTIONARY OF SLANG AND UNCONVENTIONAL ENGLISH. By Eric Partridge. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1937. $12.50.

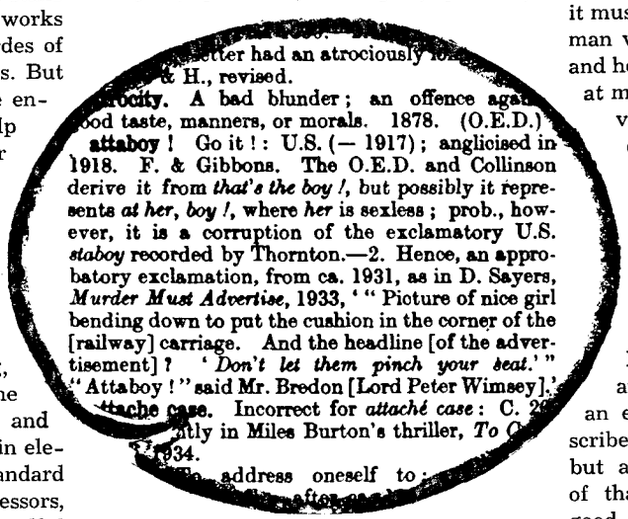
Reviewed by H. L. MENCKEN

AS one who has gone a-faring, in his day, through the damp and difficult catacombs of lexicography, I can testify that Eric Partridge's new "Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English" represents a really sickening amount of labor. Here is a book of 999 large and closely printed pages, containing definitions of nearly 40,000 terms and weighing almost four pounds, and yet it was all done by one man. Very few dictionaries, in this machine age, are produced thus as *soli a cappella*. Most of them are gang-jobs bossed by large staffs of superintendents, clerks of the works and straw-bosses, with endless hordes of slaves to run down the hard words. But Mr. Partridge undertook the whole enterprise on his own, with no help save what he could get from other dictionaries—and that, in many cases, was precious little.

His skill, put to the test, turned out to be equal to his diligence, and the result is an extremely learned and useful volume, long yearned for by fans of language. It doesn't deal only with slang, properly so called, but also with the general body of popular words and phrases, some of them never heard in elegant society but others almost Standard English. Unlike most of his predecessors, Mr. Partridge does not evade the dreadful vocabulary of the schoolyard. All the four-letter unmentionables that everybody knows but nobody (save the proletarian novelists) ever writes are listed, and though some of them have their vowels replaced by sanitary stars, they are discussed at length and their etymology and moral history are set forth boldly. It appears that most of them were once quite respectable, and that some actually began life as euphemisms. But today they are under an interdict more effective than that of the Holy Office, and even the great Oxford Dictionary omits the more pungent of them.

In order to get his immense material into one volume Mr. Partridge had to resort to a scheme of abbreviations that is sometimes not too clear, but the reader, after a little practice, tumbles to it, and so damns it no more. All the terms listed by Farmer and Henley, Grose, Barrère and Leland, Hotten, Ware and the other earlier explorers of the same field are included in the vocabulary, and Mr. Partridge has added at least as many contributions of his own, many of them neologisms of the last few years. It is a pity that he excludes all Americanisms save those that have been naturalized in English, for it is in the United States, for a generation or more, that all the best slang has been devised. The English, it would seem, have lost the linguistic inventiveness which so brilliantly marked them in Shakespeare's time. They still make new words and phrases, but not many of their novelties reveal any ingenuity. The bulk of their supply now comes from the Republic, but they resist the flow on wheezy patriotic and esthetic grounds, and the importations that they admit are not always the most vivid and saucy.

An idle tour of the book shows that *whoopee, roadhog, hornswoggle, cutie, necking, fantods, attaboy, hoodoo,* and *speed-cop* have been taken in, but that *dingbat, pushover, hoosegow, palooka,*


& H., revised.
ocity. A bad blunder; an offence agai
od taste, manners, or morals. 1878. (O.E.D.)
attaboy! Go it!: U.S. (— 1917); anglicised in
1918. F. & Gibbons. The O.E.D. and Collinson
derive it from that's the boy!, but possibly it repre-
sents at her, boy!, where her is sexless; prob., how-
ever, it is a corruption of the exclamatory U.S.
staboy recorded by Thornton.—2. Hence, an appro-
batory exclamation, from ca. 1931, as in D. Sayers,
Murder Must Advertise, 1933, '" Picture of nice girl
bending down to put the cushion in the corner of the
[railway] carriage. And the headline [of the adver-
tisement]? 'Don't let them pinch your seat.'"
"Attaboy!" said Mr. Bredon [Lord Peter Wimsey].'
ttache case. Incorrect for attaché case: C. 2
tly in Miles Burton's thriller, To C
934.
address oneself to

ATTABOY—AS DEFINED BY MR. PARTRIDGE

harness-bull, jinx, hot-spot, jitney, corn-fed, bughouse, rumdumb, rabble-rouser, and *nerts* have yet to be admitted. *Fanny,* in England, still lacks the American sense of backside; it signifies, over there, an even more confidential area of the female anatomy, and is thus, as Mr. Partridge says, "low." It is certainly not low in this country, though one can hardly imagine a bishop using it in a pastoral letter. The verb *to goose* is still really more or less low among us, but whether low or not it remains magnificent, and the English would do well to adopt it, for they have nothing to designate the flabbergasting operation it so archly names. In their backwardness they somehow get along without it, as they get along without *outstanding,* the adjective-of-all-work of American pedagogues; the incomparable *socialite* (or *Social-Registerite*) of the newspaper brethren; *swell, jigabo, bull-fiddle, charley-horse, hurry-wagon, ticket-chopper, cheer-leader, kike,* and *schooner* (of beer). The movies rain Americanisms upon them in a kind of hurricane, but they seem innocent, so far, of the actual slang of the studios, and in consequence know nothing of the superb *casting-couch,* perhaps the greatest of all Hollywood's contributions to the language.

Mr. Partridge surprises me by indicating that *sky-scraper,* in the American sense, is still a stranger to his compatriots. They use the word to designate a tall man or horse, a cocked-hat (nautical), and a rider on an old-fashioned high-wheel bicycle, but they have not yet applied it to the baby office buildings which begin to adorn the Kingsway and the Strand. I have half a hope that, when they come at last to the business of finding a name for those buildings, they will pass over *sky-scraper* in favor of the German *Wolken-krätzer* (cloud-scratcher). *Wolkenkrätzer,* I have no doubt, was suggested by *sky-scraper,* but surely it is immensely better. Its gaudy boldness, indeed, indicates that it must have been invented by some German who had lived in the United States, and here picked up a truly American skill at making words. *Sky-scraper* is so obvious that it seems almost English, even in the American sense that the English reject.

Mr. Partridge surprises me again by omitting *bed-tick* as a designation for our lovely national emblem, the Stars and Stripes. Unless my pelagic friends deceive me, it has been used by British sailors for at least a century, and is still in general use today. It is an excellent term, for it not only describes vividly the thing it designates, but also includes a disdainful criticism of that thing—a characteristic of most good slang. *Cop,* which is commonly thought to be American, is actually English. It comes, not from *copper,* but from the verb *to cop,* and *copper* is only a derivative. Thus, *speed-cop,* when it got to England, was already half familiar, and only pedants resisted it. One of those pedants, a magistrate, undertook some time ago to fine an ecclesiastic for applying it to what is known to English law as a *mobile policeman,* but the ecclesiastic stood on his rights, and the majority of the nobility and gentry sided with him. Only a little while before that the Privy Council had decided formally that *O.K.* was good English, despite its undoubtedly American origin. Mr. Partridge shows that it was already so far naturalized in the late eighties that it appeared in a music-hall song.

His book is not to be reviewed in a column or two. It deserves hard and prayerful study, and not only for its naughty words. It is a serious contribution to a difficult subject, and greatly surpasses all its predecessors.

A revised edition of Mr. Mencken's "The American Language" was recently issued.

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Fighting to Live

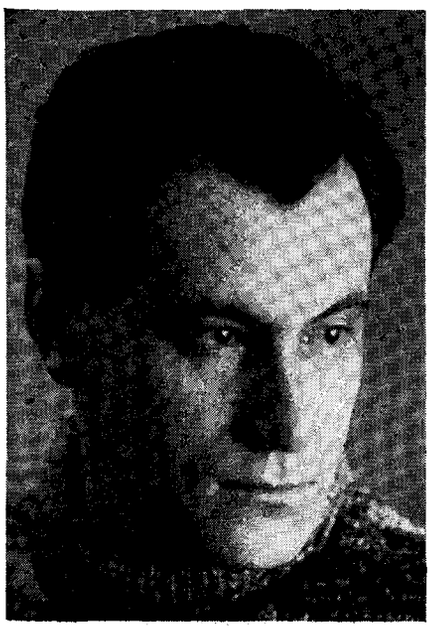
PEACE IS WHERE THE TEMPESTS BLOW. By Valentine Kataev. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by SAMUEL NOCK

ALEXANDRA KOLONTAY once said, "You can't make a revolution. But give people the choice of dying, or fighting for a chance to live, and they'll fight." Of what caused the revolution in Russia, we in America know comparatively little, but perhaps not entirely through our own fault. If the conditions that caused the revolution were presented to us we should either refuse to consider them, or else fail to understand them, because they were too far outside human life as we know it. It is nevertheless unfortunate if any of us continue to regard the Russian Revolution as something manufactured by Lenin, Trotsky and Company.

Valentine Kataev is far too shrewd a writer and far too artistic a creator to give any detailed account of what followed in Russia the mutiny on the *Potemkin*. He evidently knows that documentary evidence is not worth much either as propaganda or as entertainment. Yet he manages in this tale to convey to his readers the full tragedy, the full despair of 1905, and all its implications. This he accomplishes by a method simple in appearance yet really so difficult that only an artist can manage it: he looks at the whole situation through the eyes of children.

An ordinary child in an ordinary and respectable home, Petya played and went to school. He also went on mysterious and sometimes terrible errands with his pauper chum, Gavrik. What the errands were and why they had to be done, Gavrik knew. Petya did not; yet dimly he realized that the times were out of joint.



VALENTINE KATAEV

The torture and sudden death that he witnessed, the violence and the unreason, opened in his mind the bud of doubt. They could do no more in any boy of nine, well protected and well fed; but this little was enough.

Petya, delighting like his author in the Russian countryside and Russian water, engaging in pranks of childhood, and thinking Russian thoughts—somehow Petya came to know the other, deadly Russia. This was the Russia that Gavrik knew, the Russia that tortured his grandfather into imbecility, that destroyed the happiness and even the lives of those who had the courage to think and to speak and to act. Although Gavrik was a child he suffered as a man. Yet it was between Petya and Gavrik, a whole civilization apart, that there existed an almost Tom-and-Huck friendship. Russia could rejoice in that friendship—later.

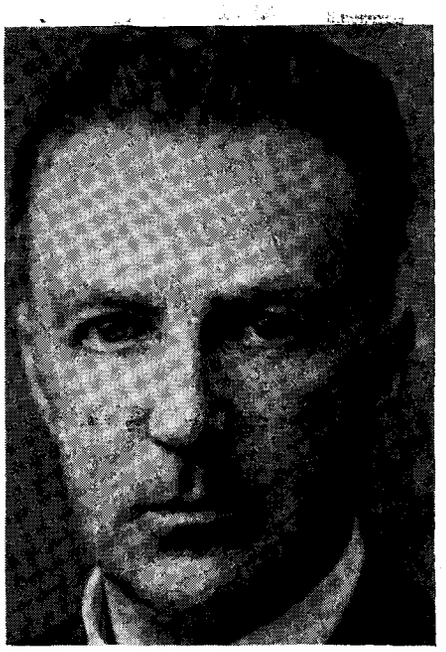
This book is not propaganda: it is a beautiful and thrilling story of Russia, the Russia that crushed the revolt of 1905, but that would welcome the revolt of 1917. It is the story of two boys; but it makes clear why, when they came of age, they would fight to live—in the Russia they loved.

Good Conversation Preserved in Ink

AS I WAS GOING DOWN SACKVILLE STREET. By Oliver St. John Gogarty. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by JAMES WHITALL

THE title of this factual phantasy by the many-sided Oliver Gogarty is as inadequate, despite its being the first line of an old Dublin ballad, as was Joyce's for the monumental work in which the present author was a front row figure. The fabulous Buck Mulligan of "Ulysses" does stroll down Sackville Street, and I like him best in his mood of anecdotal *flânerie*, but he has many other activities and he is at last, as his introducer Francis Hackett writes, "now on paper." This fact is unquestionably a piece of great good fortune for all those with even the most tenuous interest in Irish literature and politics; and for me it has revised a shamefully deficient estimate formed during a speakeasy luncheon in the east Fifties some years ago. Mutual affection for George Moore and my delight in hearing a really great story-teller in action made the occasion memorable for me and I believe not without enjoyment for him. On quitting the smoky little room I asked myself the inevitable question: could the savor of Gogarty's talk be transferred to the printed page? Now I know that it can and that the savor is thereby heightened; this magnificent transference is an accomplishment which alone places his book among the precious



OLIVER ST. JOHN GOGARTY

few of its very special kind. In many other ways it is a book that resembles no other that I have encountered, for its author's methods of presenting a personality or an occurrence are as varied in manner and technique as the color mutations upon the mountains round about Dublin.

In one of his moods Gogarty recalls the genius-stricken author of "Ulysses"; but he is always essentially Gogarty. I suspect that the book, particularly its opening chapters, will find its way into many Joycean sanctums and there be furiously discussed. I will not venture upon that thin ice, because of space limits and a desire to say something about another of Gogarty's moods, to me more appealing: the one in which he produces pure evocative English.

There are two conversations with Yeats, one concerning George Moore's alleged impotence, and another in which Gogarty attempts to persuade Yeats to attend the Governor-General's Spring Show by suggesting that they should both wear high silk hats, the only ones that would be seen at the first official function of the Free State; with Yeats still recalcitrant he has only to mention the butter-churning that is to take place and to intimate that he himself is "deep in the folk-lore of the churn." The re-creation here is sheer delight and tells more about Yeats than many chapters from another pen might do.

Gogarty performs similar miracles of character revelation with AE, Moore, Griffiths, Collins, and Talbot Clifton; and there is an abundance of lesser subjects, cunningly **and** wittily dealt with, among which a delving into the etymology of the word "pettifogging" should not be passed over. It is a vigorous book, often beautiful, and full of subtly flashing wit.

James Whitall is the author of "English Years," a book of reminiscences in which George Moore figures prominently.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Enlightened Research

IN establishing a Ph. D. degree in "The History of American Civilization," Harvard University has had in mind primarily the man who wants to study American life in terms of American thought, art, history, and social institutions without wasting his time in work irrelevant to his purpose but hitherto required for the doctorate. But it has incidentally wrought a revolution in the study of literature which is certain to be imitated by other universities and to have a considerable importance for the national culture.

The candidate for the new degree must satisfy the general requirement for admission to the graduate school. He must also satisfy the committee which administers the degree that the research he proposes to undertake is important and that he is competent to do it. The committee's approval will not be easy for him to get, for it intends to accept only the most promising candidates. But once he has been accepted he will have a greater freedom in his work, may pursue it more consistently in its own terms, and may employ a greater variety of instruments than has ever before been possible in the doctorate in literature. All the facilities of the university, so far as they bear on his investigation, will be at his disposal, but he will not be subjected to the taboos and fetiches usually associated with the Ph. D. in literature.

The candidate must master six fields of study. Of these fields three will be a common requirement for all candidates. The remaining three will be optional—and the candidate will select them not because they satisfy some formal scheme or precedent but because they have a direct bearing on his research. The three fields of the common requirement are the social and economic history of the United States, the history of literature in the United States, and the history of political theory in the United States. This intelligent and invariable minimum is aimed at a glaring weakness of the system under which most graduate degrees in literature have been awarded. The young Ph. D. in literature has seldom been required to know anything about the social matrix of literature, and the average dissertation has existed in a medium peculiar to the species, completely insulated from the society of which literature is a part and an expression. The new degree recognizes that literature is a social phenomenon; that fact alone marks a revolution in education.

The freedom granted by the remaining requirements is also revolutionary. The candidate may choose his other three fields from: the history of religion and theology in the United States, the history of philosophy in the United States, the history of science, the history of the fine arts, the history of religion and theology, the history of philosophy, the history of political theory, the history of European literature (especially English), and "any other subject or subjects, knowledge of which is in the opinion of the committee desirable for the student's successful carrying on of his thesis." In addition, "the committee will be free to add to the requirements in cases in which the subject of investigation demands special knowledge of a sort not covered by the ordinary minimum requirements . . . a student investigating a problem primarily concerned with social history may need extra work in sociology, labor economics, or kindred fields . . . or a student primarily concerned with literature may need special training in the theory of criticism and esthetics." In other words, the program is realistic, pragmatic, and *ad hoc*. The committee will sanction or prescribe whatever the candidate's investigation requires. If an intelligent research can be facilitated by anthropology, sociology, climatology, abnormal psychology, statistics, numismatics, or agronomy, the committee will sanction the program and provide the facilities. The research itself will determine the instruments of research and there will be no surplus requirements, no wasted effort, and no tribute to academic theory, tradition, or vested interest.

Ostensibly the degree is established to recognize and legitimatize the indefinable field where history and literature meet. Thus one of the first candidates accepted by the committee is a man whose research both the history department and the English department of a leading university refused to sanction because each felt that it came within the other's jurisdiction. But it does more than recognize that hitherto unrecognized field. It asserts the interdependence of history and literature, it extends the academic franchise to values in the study of literature that have so far had to be cultivated outside the universities, and it strikes a heavy blow at the worst tyrannies and absurdities of the doctorate in literature.

One immediate effect is to deliver the study of American literature from the English departments. In most universities American literature is still regarded as a stepchild, even an illegitimate stepchild, of English literature, and the man who is primarily interested in it can get his degree only by doing a lot of work in English literature that has no necessary bearing on it. The new degree allows him to ignore English literature (provided that he enters the graduate school with a decent knowledge of it) when it has no relation to his research. More important still, he is liberated from the philological requirements which have been the worst obscenity in the academic study of literature and have forced the student to spend from a fifth to a third of his apprenticeship on work that has nothing whatever to do with literary values. The man who is interested in the novels of Herman Melville may now get to work on them without first torturing himself with Gothic, Gaelic, Frisian, Erse, Icelandic, the history of English grammar, and other academic grotesques of which Melville never heard.

There is the possibility that he may, if he likes, get to work on Shakespeare's plays with a similar disregard of philology. He could probably phrase his research problem to bring it within the terms of the degree in the History of American Civilization—and so waste less time than the English degree now requires him to. At any rate, the realism and the liberality of the new Harvard degree will force other committees on American literature to modify their procedure in imitation, and the English departments must consider a similar renovation in order to prevent a stampede of graduate students to American literature.

The innovation has an even more important bearing on criticism. The weakness of the academic study of literature has been its failure to make critics of its practitioners. Criticism is the proper end of all literary study, but the system has produced specialists in trivial, factual, purely literary information. The new degree breaks the insulation between literature and life, and implements criticism by means of history, philosophy, science, sociology, and economics. This is, in effect, what extra-academic criticism has been trying to do for a quarter of a century but has failed to do because its practitioners lacked both the knowledge and the accuracy that systematic graduate training is intended to produce. The breach between academic and non-academic literary thinking may thus be closed; if it is, a richer, broader, more profound criticism will be possible, one that is based on the present state of knowledge in its entirety. Such a development would work powerfully to produce a literary climate in the universities, which they now lack, and to make them once more a force in American literature, as for almost a century they have not been.

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Letters to the Editor: *"Midnight on the Desert;" The Tolstoy Family Again*

Mr. Priestley's Speculations

SIR:—In your review of J. B. Priestley's "Midnight on the Desert" in *The Saturday Review* for March 27, you write, "—apart from his metaphysical reveries, Mr. Priestley hasn't much to say." The implication that the metaphysical reveries *do* say something is not developed in the rest of your review. This is a pity, for Mr. Priestley's speculations on the nature of time, eternity, the fourth, fifth, and sixth dimensions, and the writings of Dunne and Ouspensky, touch upon ideas of real philosophical importance which (as he points out) are seldom touched upon by professional philosophers. Pleasantly and unaffectedly, he *says* something upon these topics. Another (unrelated and much less important) topic handled by Mr. Priestley is the poisonous effect of "popular science" in the hands of cocksure hack compilers; he does well by it.

It seems to me that your criticism of this book, perfectly well taken so far as it goes, centers too much upon the economic-social aspects of Priestley's soliloquies. Fifteen years ago one could not move about in educational or critical literature without crossing the trail of Freud; his odor was part of the Zeitgeist and was borne upon every wind of doctrine. Today in the most unexpected corners the hoof is the hoof of Marx—or Pareto, or the latest vendor of groups, masses, economics, politics, sociology, or the Corpulent State. These metaphors imply nothing about your review except that its focus seems to leave certain interesting and even important areas of Priestley's book in darkness. Perhaps they indicate also that I have developed an anaphylactic reaction to the Socialized Review.

HARRISON L. REINKE.

Lakeville, Conn.

In Reply to Mr. Maude

SIR:—Mr. Maude, in his letter in your issue of March 27th, quotes from my review of "The Final Struggle" Countess Tolstoy's assertion that her children and grandchildren would have remained penniless had Chertkov had his way regarding Tolstoy's secret will. He then asks, "whose fault was it?" Question and implication are entirely irrelevant. Neither in "The Final Struggle" nor anywhere else has Countess Tolstoy's ability as manager of the Tolstoy estate been criticized.

There seems to be a vast difference of opinion regarding the purpose which inspired the publication of "The Final Struggle." In his preface Serge Tolstoy declares that his purpose in publishing his mother's diary is to show how wrong Chertkov was in his "one-sided diatribe against her." Now Mr. Maude tells us that Serge Tolstoy's purpose in publishing "The Final Struggle" was to defend his father. Mr. Maude is quite right. His own introduction, the preface, and the contents of the book are very condemnatory so far as the mother is concerned and are presented in the spirit of "Brutus is an honorable man."

Concerning Countess Alexandra's part in the tragic affair her brother, Serge Tolstoy, quotes from the biography of Tolstoy's friend, P. I. Birukov, "People arriving at the Tolstoys' received the impression of some kind of fight between two parties: one (at the head of which stood Chertkov) was represented by Alexandra Lvovna and Varvara M. Feokritova, and the other by Sofya Andreevna and her sons." Serge Tolstoy further explains that of the sons "only Andrey and Lev were completely on their mother's side," and that he, "was rather opposed to his mother's demands and in favor of the others." A son who defends his mother would not describe her as having "poisoned father's life from the end of June till he left Yasnaya Polyana." Similarly Countess Alexandra herself speaks of her aversion for her mother and gives her nurse's tale as the reason for it. But whatever the inspiration "The Tragedy of Tolstoy" is full of such phrases as "a bitterness rising from lack of love for my mother." Referring to her mother's attempt to swallow opium, the daughter writes, "I was about to snatch the bottle from her hands but a sudden loathing overcame me."

Mr. Maude is quite right. Countess Tolstoy's diaries have helped to a better understanding of the man Tolstoy. But these diaries were not the only records that cast him down from his pedestal. First and most damaging have been his own diaries. The impression they made was strengthened by the reminiscences of his much loved sister-in-law Kusminskaia, by Leon Tolstoy's "The Truth about My Father," as well as the Countess Tolstoy's diaries. Yet these contributions have not cast Tolstoy down as thoroughly as the work of his partisans, such as his daughter Alexandra's "The Tragedy of Tolstoy," the present volume, and all the other contributions of his would-be defenders. Their obvious bias and exaggeration have done Tolstoy the most harm.

The fact that all this campaign of abuse against Tolstoy's wife—and consequently at the great man himself—has been carried on because of the ancient and human desire to create an idol does not make it less deplorable. Tolstoy was a genius; a peerless novelist and an outstanding ethical philosopher; but he was not a saint. Indeed he suffered from very nearly all the weaknesses that the flesh is heir to. His quarrels with his wife were really insignificant by comparison with the lifelong struggle between the good and evil in him.

MANYA GORDON.

New York City.

"IT'S HEYWOOD BROUN ORGANIZING A GHOST-WRITER'S UNION."

Oudard, Not Aubry

SIR:—I have a communication from William Aspenwall Bradley, the literary agent of Octave Aubry, who wants me to call your attention to an error in the otherwise excellent review of "St. Helena" by Octave Aubry which appeared in the January 16th issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature*.

Your reviewer says: "Octave Aubry has produced a very lively and very careful study which is far superior to his rather popular book on John Law." Mr. Bradley says: "Octave Aubry has just confirmed my own impression that he has never written such a book in his life, and therefore we both feel that said error should be called to the attention of the *Review* and of its readers. I am inclined to think that Mr. Allison confused Aubry with another French writer, Georges Oudard, who did write such a book on John Law."

F. P. FRAZIER.

J. B. Lippincott Co.
Philadelphia, Pa.

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Last of the Romans

HAVE YOU ANYTHING TO DECLARE? By Maurice Baring. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1937. $2.75.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

MR. BARING is the last and one of the pleasantest of the Romans, the final representative of a race that will be missed when it is too late. Once the elk trod the Irish hill. Once the passenger-pigeons darkened the sky. And once there were men who read to satisfy their souls, out of divine curiosity, and not for prestige. Of such was the kingdom of Heaven, whatever it may be now.

In an easy and graceful foreword Mr. Baring explains that his anthology came to be compiled because of a dream about crossing the Styx with an assortment of literary luggage. The polite customs officials (only on that frontier are they polite) asked the stereotyped question. Mr. Baring came clean and declared everything to such good purpose that when he does actually arrive at the dolorous ferry I am sure he will be given the courtesy of the port.

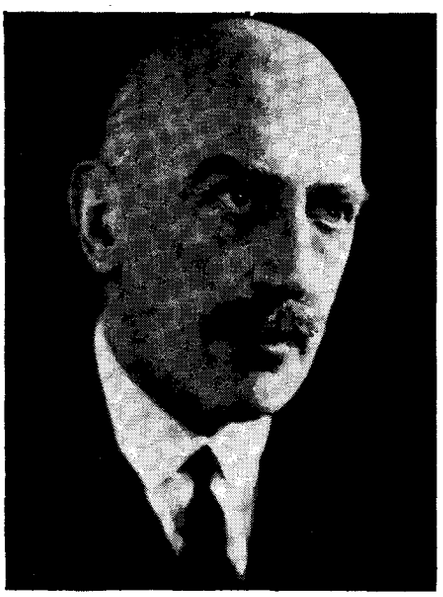
His book, a rambling and heterogeneous collection of noble utterances and his own clear commentary, cannot be systematically appraised. He does, it is true, keep his Greeks and his Romans more or less together. Dante may be said to have a department to himself. But apart from such obvious arrangements Mr. Baring follows his own sweet will, and La Bruyère lies down with Mr. R. A. Wason, and John Skelton is cheek by jowl with John Oliver Hobbes. The only clue to his labyrinth is the Ariadne thread of association. On you drift in a gentle, meandering current of splendid citation or enlightened comment. And you do not grow weary.

It was probably Matthew Arnold who observed of one of the few men he admired that cultivation lay in his way and he found it. Anyhow, the sentence fits Mr. Baring to a T. That cultivation lay in his way may have been good fortune, but that he found it is his own fault. And what a foison he has found and in the highest sense. Literally his gusto, good sense, and good taste, make the index-worms and concordance hounds of the times look the pitiable things they are. A diplomat who *knows* high literature in seven languages must be a portent to a professor who has cross-referenced it in the three necessary to a modern doctorate. No Zenonian paradox will prevent this particular Achilles from overtaking the tortoise. And yet the sentence of Desmond MacCarthy concerning some person unnamed, which Mr. Baring quotes with proper pleasure, applies with special exactness to Mr. Baring: "He never read a book from a sense of duty in his life."

Naturally his book tells you a good deal about Mr. Baring. You discover him to be the kind of man who likes the Odyssey better than the Iliad, but knows that the Iliad is the statelier and more tremendous. Euripides he loves. But he only declares "Prometheus Bound" when he comes to Æschylus and oddly enough had to be told by a friend that Shaw-Stewart's

> O Hell of ships and cities,
> Hell of men like me!

was fetched up from the abyssal deeps of the "Agamemnon." Eton taught him to detest the "Æneid." But Catullus is another guess matter. He knows Dante like the back of his hand. And that goes for Cervantes. That he does not mention Rabelais seems queer. Like every man of sense he loves Dr. Johnson. For Mr. Baring Shelley outsoars the shadow of our night including Keats. Nor can the majesty of Byron be parodied. You cannot make fun of a leaping tiger. And let no man sneer at Swinburne even if it



MAURICE BARING

did take him six lines to say what Sappho said in one. As for Corneille, and Racine and Molière and Lermontov and Pushkin and George Meredith and Baudelaire and Henry James he is always catholic yet individual, easy yet never trivial.

On a happy afternoon in 1929, I listened for several hours to the conversation of two delightful Englishmen, one a poet, the other an essayist. They ranged the whole known world of poetry. The gentle, casual talk had the vividness and gleam of an unknown trout-stream, here a pool of "spoken contemplation" and there a cataract of epigram. I have not forgotten the kind faces, the gay speech, the masterly application of a beautiful old phrase, or the masterly coining of a beautiful new one. Sitting with them I knew conversation for the art it once was, a thing of strength and gaiety, of lightness and of depth. Mr. Baring's book reminded me of that afternoon. I wish he were not the last of the Romans.

People in a Legend

WINDLESS SKY. By Fritz Faulkner. New York: Covici-Friede. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by WALTER HAVIGHURST

THIS intense and dramatic novel concerns a feudal household in a rather indeterminate backwoods section of America shortly after the Civil War. The members of the Hedman family, dominant in the settlement, exist together in the shadowy big house in the valley, but they live in passionate isolation from one another. The wife of Lewis Hedman, engrossed in her embroidery, broods on her wickedness and on her people, the dead, whom she had left in the pleasant fields of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The unmarried cousin, Maria Lessig, lives among the Hedmans, waiting tensely for nothing, but her preoccupation is a sinking steamboat on the river thirteen years before. The elder sister, Laura, has her own hidden sorrow and frustration, and the first-born, Karl, is a man made separate by religion and remorse. Unlike these brooding folk are the wayward younger Hedmans, about whom the slender story gathers.

Very slowly the story emerges. It brings together the willful Emma, her strapping brother William, and Lance Bowring, an elusive young squatter who knows all the hideouts along the river and the secret ways through the hills. The bond between these three, of friendship and of passion, is emphasized by the larger background of suspicion and hate. Their story is taut and dramatic, but so interrupted and so difficult to follow, through broken sequences of consciousness, that some of its effect is lost. And it is a story that stands quite apart from the theme of a vindictive religion, which recurs rather persistently throughout the book. In this sense Mr. Faulkner's novel is divided. Its theme and its story never become one.

Though Mr. Faulkner's setting seems to be somewhere along the middle Mississippi, the Hedmans live apart from time and place. They are not an American family but the people in a legend, a sombre legend, full of symbols and dominated by an atmosphere of cruelty and terror. Indeed, it is the creation of this atmosphere that reveals the intensity of the author's imagination. One may forget, in some of his pages, that this is not the work of another Mr. Faulkner, whose nightmare world has been elaborated in a succession of novels.

The style of "Windless Sky," occasionally self-conscious in its rhythms, is notable for a sustained, sombre poetry and the etched phrasing in which it reports inner states and outer observations. It is a style which adds significantly to the effect of a striking and imaginative novel.

Walter Havighurst is the author of "The Quiet Shore," reviewed March 6.

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Travels in Other Americas

GUATEMALA. By Erna Fergusson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by JOSEPH HENRY JACKSON

ONE of the difficulties with getting Guatemala down on paper is that there are so many Guatemalas. Small as the country is, it has many faces. And if you try to say of one of them, "This, then, is Guatemala," you have simply missed the boat. Whatever you've said, you're wrong. It isn't.

The chief reason that Erna Fergusson has written a good book here is that she understood this. Apparently from the very beginning she "got" Guatemala. She saw the significance of the old Mayan civilization, and she gives her readers a very good account of Mayan times. But she was not, like Agnes Rothery in her "Images of Earth," carried away by the mystical side of it. Nor was she, like Aldous Huxley in his "Beyond the Mexique Bay," irritated because the Central American does things differently from the North American or the European. She considers Guatemala objectively, not as a series of experiences more or less upsetting to herself. Consequently she has written an intelligent book and a fair book.

Naturally Miss Fergusson takes a look at Guatemala City, the capital, with its smart modern streets, its foreign colonies, its political inner circles, its financial and business interests. That is one side of Guatemala, though it isn't what the tourist comes to see nor what the arm-chair traveler cares much about. But she gets out of the city quickly, moving up into the highlands that are really the best of Guatemala. There she visits the villages, the Indian Guatemala, old, remote, in many ways the backbone of the country. Her reflection of this magnificently mountainous section, its people and their manners, their curious pagan-Christian beliefs, their customs and their handicrafts, is remarkably clear and sympathetic. So, too, is her sketch of Antigua, the splendid wrecked city that was shaken from its foundations in the same year that North Americans were dumping tea into Boston Harbor. Antigua is one of the finest relics of colonial Spain anywhere in the world, and Miss Fergusson gives it its full due.

There is also the Guatemala of the Alta Vera Paz district. That is a German Guatemala; a land of great *fincas,* or plantations, run like machinery and geared to the production of some of the world's finest coffee. Miss Fergusson doesn't miss it, nor does she forget the Guatemala of bananas, down on the steaming coastal plain. That is the Guatemala of the United Fruit Company, so to say, but it is an important part of the country, and she takes it in. And of course behind all these there is the Guatemala of centuries past, to be viewed physically in the ruins of Quiriga (and of Copan, over the Honduran border), and to be seen spiritually in the eyes of today's Indians, a constant reminder of the great days of the Mayan empires. This has its place in her book too; her picture of the country is rounded, full, complete but for such matters as the Peten jungles into which no one but the *chicleros* and a few Carnegie Institute men ever penetrate.

On the political and economic side her task was harder, but it is to her credit that she does not try to pass judgment. Her chapter on President Ubico and his policies is notable for its common sense. Best of all, she knows that it is impossible for the short-time visitor to understand the Indian. Instead of trying to explain him, therefore, she lets a cross-section of the country tell the story in a chapter of quotations from Guatemalans with whom she talked—a *finquero,* the landlady, a young Guatemalan educated in the States, a Protestant missionary, the padre, a German storekeeper, a *ladino* or mixed-blood storekeeper, a city woman who employs Indian servants. Which again is a common-sense procedure.

All of this is set down in an easy style that may deceive you, at first, into thinking you are reading just another pleasantly written travel book of no particular account. As you get into Miss Fergusson's book, though, you can't help seeing that it's a great deal more. In fact, all unassumingly, she has written the best book on Guatemala since the Maudslays wrote their classic in the nineties.

Joseph Henry Jackson, literary editor of the San Francisco Chronicle, *is the author of "Mexican Interlude."*

PERUVIAN PAGEANT: A Journey in Time. By Blair Niles. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1937. $3.50.

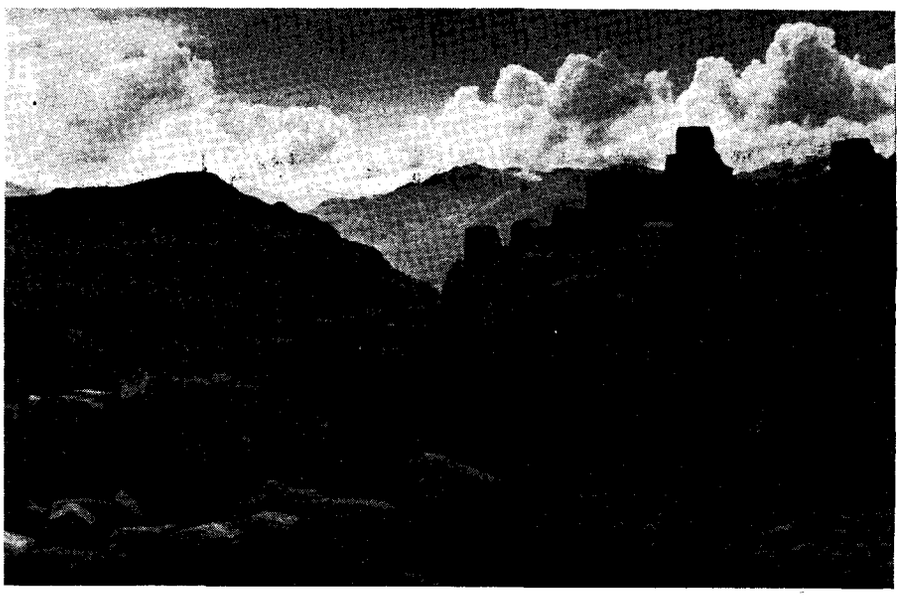
Reviewed by LUCIA ALZAMORA

BLAIR NILES went twice to Peru, once in fact and once in fancy; and generously, if not always quite fortunately, in this enthusiastic book she gives the reader the benefit of both trips. "Peruvian Pageant" is not only the story of Mrs. Niles's pilgrimage by air to present-day Peru, but it is a breathless history of that country with the author eagerly present at Atahualpa's or Pizarro's or la Perricholi's shoulder at the very moment when things are popping.

What Mrs. Niles has done is to correlate the steps of her own journey with the course of Peruvian history and legend, so that with her observation of the careful unwrapping of a pre-Inca mummy and her visits to the ruins of Cajamarquilla and Paracas the thing has begun. When she goes to Cajamarca and Cuzco and on into the Andean Sierra we have the Inca Empire and the Conquest as well. Then it's back to Lima, to the Viceroys and La Perricholi and Santa Rosa and El Beato Martín, and finally to Simón Bolívar and the Rebellion.

It's a good enough idea, and Mrs. Niles has approached it with an abundance of love. So much so, in fact, that despite the undeniable excellence and scope of her source material and the completeness of her exploratory journey, the book is pervaded by a strange, weighty sentimentality which doesn't suit it. I am afraid it has too much personality. I keep thinking of old Ricardo Palma who never raised his voice and even of the dry, enchanting Mr. Prescott.

Lucia Alzamora is the daughter of a former Peruvian minister to England.



FORTRESS OF SACSAHUAMÁN. *From "Peruvian Pageant."*

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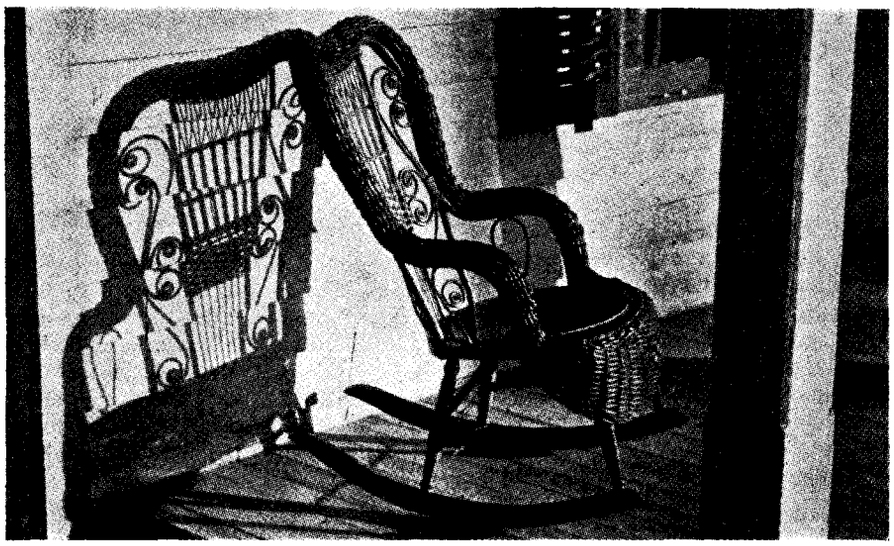

PHOTO BY RALPH STEINER: *from "America as Americans See It," Edited by Fred J. Ringel (Harcourt, Brace)*

Dr. Pitkin Prescribes

CAREERS AFTER FORTY. By Walter B. Pitkin. New York: Whittlesey House. 1937. $1.75.

Reviewed by MABEL S. ULRICH

THE first third of Mr. Pitkin's latest summons to middle-age glows with hope and cheer. Not only does he resolve the lurking inferiority complex of those who have been buffeted by job-hungry youth, but as case after case trips from his pen—all of oldsters who even in the senescent eighties have wrung fame and fortune from under its very nose—pity begins to surge up in one's heart for those unfortunates who must somehow struggle along until they may enter the magic forties.

Indeed we are still blinking at the ever widening vistas when a little cloud of doubt begins to cast its shadow. Let's be realistic, Mr. Pitkin urges, no matter how it hurts. After all these were highly talented persons, and we can't all be Irvin Cobbs or Marie Dresslers. What can ordinary folk like us do? He is ready to tell us, but first it is necessary to point out the closed doors. Firmly he shuts one after another, sometimes even slamming them. Maybe you have been dreaming of spending your old age raising poultry. The field is overcrowded. Perhaps forestry and a life in the wilds has been your desire. "It's much too rough and tumble." The arts are positively out, as are science, all the professions, foreign languages, politics, clerking, library work. True, you might take up heating, piping, and air-conditioning, but only if you have had practical experience.

By the time you have got this far, you are likely to be feeling pretty well let down, but Mr. Pitkin has no intention of leaving you in the lurch. No, he has lots of surprises up his sleeve for you. What if some of these may require a little delay? Everyone knows that this is an era of rapid change. Take coöperatives, for example. Soon they will offer opportunities for "a swelling stream of middle-aged people." As for forums, he sees "careers for perhaps 50,000 men and women as forum leaders in the next quarter century." Meanwhile why not invent the proper dog-food for which there is, he has found, an enormous demand?

If you can afford a short training course, you can make candy, run a roadside restaurant, or even service trailers when people have learned to want you to. He has more difficulty with women. Married ones, indeed, are almost hopelessly unplaceable. The single or widowed, however, need not despair. They can take people traveling, or chaperone college houses, or run nurseries. One fears that too many women in the forties may still turn aside from these dazzling careers to envy Wally Simpson, but if they do, it won't be Mr. Pitkin's fault.

In brief the results of the twelve years of study the author claims to have devoted to this subject, have had precisely the opposite effect on this reader from the one he ordained. Dr. Osler's chloroform cure seems hardly less disheartening. Nevertheless the problem is a very serious one, and is destined to become more and more insistent as all who have studied recent vital statistics must acknowledge. The relative proportion in our population of those above forty is increasing every year, and must inevitably have a profound effect on the industrial and social problems of even the next generation. Mr. Pitkin has done well to call attention to it, and he says a number of sensible things that may nerve the discouraged to new endeavors. The book will doubtless have a large sale; every printed cure for frustrated living does.

No Mere "Novelist"

SMIRE. By Branch Cabell. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by HERBERT J. MULLER

THIS book concludes the adventures in dreamland of the erstwhile Smirt and Smith. To rehearse these adventures is unnecessary; Branch Cabell is still doing business with the themes and symbols of the late James Branch Cabell. We again follow a lonely wanderer whose loneliness is somewhat mitigated by his "not-ever-failing" articulateness and urbanity, and by his insuperable attraction for lovely ladies.

This particular fable is interesting chiefly because it is an explicit apology for Mr. Cabell's life work. He freely confesses that he burns with no generous indignation whatever and is completely indifferent to the class struggle as to any other "material accident" of the contemporary world, but he defends himself by drawing a distinction between "novelists" and "romancers." The novelist presents life as it actually exists or once existed, and hence is at best a copyist; the romancer invents a world of his own, and hence is at worst a creator, a *poietes* or "maker." He himself is of the creators, humbly striving to place human beings among surroundings in which they may live "more adequately, more movingly, and more interestingly."

Realism of course is only a technique and not the necessary badge of seriousness and maturity; its practitioners have no corner on dignity or "truth." But neither has Mr. Cabell. His own distinction is artificial and naive. It is based on the schoolboy's conception of imaginative work as necessarily fantastic, like Poe's—a departure from rather than an illumination of experience. To call Dumas a maker and Tolstoy a copyist is simply silly.

"Smire" has charming passages that exemplify his seven great virtues: "distinction and clarity and beauty and symmetry and tenderness and truth and urbanity." (Mr. Cabell might be embarrassed were he called upon to define some of these terms—or to state the criteria by which one distinguishes "true" from false reality.) It also has a deal of heavy-handed satire, of feeble epigram and synthetic wit, and above all a dreadfully self-conscious urbanity. The very style for which Mr. Cabell is admired becomes cloying; one yearns to halt with a rowdy phrase this parade of polished sentences.

It would be unfair to Mr. Cabell to compare him with mere "novelists" like Thackeray, Hardy, and Tolstoy. But it is perhaps not unreasonable (to borrow his favorite rhetorical device) to say that his world is less adequate, moving, and interesting than that even of many a lesser copy-cat today.

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

The Folder

To Be Practical

IF I had faith in God and were to pray,
Not as I last did, in devout despair,
Nor with a gambler's passes in the air,
But in my foolish forebears' childish way—
Believing the first fool of Christendom—
I would not pray for love nor charity
Nor any week-kneed virtue, nor to be
Crowned as His servant in a world to come.
Vices I'd pray for!—to be blessed with greed,
To want more and yet more in cashable gain,
And have the tiger strength and coyote brain
To steal it lawfully. I would not need
To pray again, nor bow my head again,
Ever, to any gods or any men.

LEROY MACLEOD.

The brightest candle placed on the cake for William Dean Howells's hundredth birthday was a piece written by William Allen White in the *Emporia Gazette,* bless his heart. It's characteristic of Bill White to come along, every once in so often (as he always has), with the absolute best of whatever needs to be said. I haven't got the clipping handy, so I can't quote verbatim (the whole piece deserves reprinting), but it's the story of the first bang-up company dinner in the White household when Mr. and Mrs. White were a young married couple. The guest of honor was Mr. Howells, then lecturing in Emporia. In the friendly Kansas way all the neighbors were interested in this important affair, and anxious to help. One sent a present of a dozen quail; but a green country cook, already flustered by the intensive preparations, collapsed into jitters when the birds were ready for the oven. The dinner was already under way, but another neighbor, looking in to see that all was well, sized up the situation. Calmly she took charge in the kitchen, cooked the quails to a turn, and (with a reassuring exchange of looks with the young hostess and a glare at Bill to warn him to silence) deftly served them herself. Mr. White tells us in his delightful reminiscences that no one enjoyed the episode more than Howells himself when after dinner their neighbor doffed the apron and was persuaded to tell what had happened.

From Bill White one can always count on the essential gravy of any human situation. Only recently did I become properly conscious of the work of a Kansas poet who wrote under the name of "Ironquill." This first came about by the accident of finding a piece of his adjoining a little squib of my own in an anthology. His name was Eugene Fitch Ware (1841-1911), and I was so pleased by what I found of his verses that, learning he came from Kansas, I wrote to Mr. White. Bill White replied by return of mail with a delightful brief biography, as follows:—

"Ironquill was a soldier of the Civil War who was a harness maker. He fell in love with a Vassar graduate who married him and took him in hand. He studied law, was admitted to the bar and she practically educated him and developed him. He had unusual talent for rhyme and for lovely imagery and was a

"IRONQUILL"
Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society.

he-man at that, a great big six-footer, who could whip his weight in wildcats. He and I were dear friends. I was young and he was a man in his fifties when I first knew him. He died in Topeka after having been United States pension commissioner and before that State senator, and in the end was one of the half dozen leading Kansas lawyers, a corporation attorney of great erudition.

"Here is a portrait of him. In spite of the walrus mustache of the period, he was a fine fellow—one of those self-educated men whose information was accurate and he always knew where to put his hand on what he wanted. He was a merry soul and one of the dearest men I ever met. Theodore Roosevelt was immensely fond of him. If I can help you in any other way, let me know."

That, I submit, is as charming a sketch of Bill White himself as it is of Ironquill.

All Tombs Are Ming

My Mind has wandered down the old parades
Whose grassy haunts
Record the footfall of the shades
That passed by lions and carved elephants
To follow rest,
When, as is best,
The brasses and the woodwinds cease
And give, even to emperors, their peace.

Yet more my Heart is errant, for I wonder
If they were far,
Although deep buried and down under
Full half the world, or other than we are
Who every day
Pass dragons they
Once met. I think each puzzled mind
Had fingers too that kisses threw behind.

HUGH WESTERN.

Speaking of the provenance of some recent titles, Harry Patterson (Grand Island, Neb.) writes one of his welcome letters. He says:—

"I worried acutely where *Eyeless in Gaza* came from—I spotted the playboy of the Israelites, but it took me months before the exact Miltonic phrase turned up, and then only because my sacred cow, Arthur Machen, keeps raving about *Lycidas* and this led me on to other Miltonic arcana. And only the other night, reading de la Mare's essay *Some Women Novelists of the 70's*, did I chance upon the final lovely joint peroration (I guess you might call it that) of the poet and Walter Savage Landor, and emitted a war-whoop when I tumbled to where Rosamond Lehmann cribbed *A Note in Music.* But I am still uninformed as to where de la Mare picked up his last title, *The Wind Blows Over*—is it Yeats' lyric from *The Land of Heart's Desire,* those lines—

The wind blows out of the gates of the day,
The wind blows over the lonely of heart . . . .?

"Have you had time to read and enjoy the splendid stories in this collection? I'll swear to gosh he is the greatest living poet, or writer en générale, not even excepting Yeats or Belloc. I was mildly griped, though, when I bought an English trade first of this *Wind Blows Over* and found that one of its best stories, 'Strangers and Pilgrims,' which is in the American edition, is omitted.

"Some time ago you brought up Geo. Kibbe Turner's strange and too little known novel, *Hagar's Hoard.* It is excellent, but it is my mature and considered conviction that Turner's other novel, *The Last Christian,* is by far the better tale. I read it serially in the old *McClure's* years

(Continued on next page)

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Writer in Hollywood

(*Continued from page 4*)

even a Rogers-Gaynor opus. I understand that "Cavalcade" had the second largest gross of its year, an elaborate musical affair being first. Such instances are beginning to make producers believe that a calculated and spontaneous dramatic effort—spontaneous as to materials, calculated as to treatment—is quite as likely to produce a film as successful even commercially as the ordinarily competent machine made scenario, built up for some "lead" or to fit some current fad.

There must have been a time when Hollywood writers were privileged to be raffish and irresponsible, since the fact has occasionally been noted in literature, but it was before I reached the place in 1932. At Fox, Julien Josephson and I talked plot over our second breakfast at nine o'clock, usually lunched with Henry King, our director, and often with Will Rogers, our lead, and frequently kept up the argument after one of Mrs. Josephson's superb dinners well toward midnight. At the instigation of the devil and Louis Weitzenkorn I lost eight dollars on the dog races one evening, and another evening a companion and I had the pleasure of shouting "encore" when an unpleasant, hairy wrestler was tossed from the stadium ring into the laps of Corey Ford and James Warner Bellah, who didn't want him. It turned out that they were doing a picture about college wrestling and had been sent to the Legion stadium by the studio. They spoke to us pleasantly but firmly about the "encores."

Such excesses were curbed on my second voyage—to MGM—by the presence of my wife, her cousin, and her mother, and by the fact that I frequently worked from daybreak till one or two o'clock in the morning. Daylight is precious on location shots and if night shots are scheduled in addition there is no rest for the wicked. The work was cool, rational, and incessant, for Vidor knows when he has his "shot." I treasure, from this period, a Leica picture of Miriam Hopkins warming her lovely arms at a floodlight one bitter cold morning in the canyon at Chino and a museum piece of Stu Erwin, frosty and dejected, taken a night or two later. It's hard to catch Stu dejected.

A third picture which was not produced, fortunately, was adapted from a Scotch novel by A. J. Cronin. This had to be reset in Iowa and virtually rewritten in five weeks. By using nights and Sundays I managed it in four weeks and three days.

There may be such a gaudy and sybaritic life for writers in Hollywood as one finds in novels and plays, but the texture of average conversation is "I've got a swell twist to break into the running action," "I can't get a good dissolve off the scene of the murder," and "Now this is the way I've handled the love scene." What is known as "the story" is never absent from any working writer's mind. Injunctions to stop worrying and eat your oatmeal will bring out a moody, "I wonder if I could open the bank failure sequence on that line."

The question of what Hollywood does to writers is quite as interesting as, but more speculative than, what writers are doing to Hollywood. There is no doubt that the neon city has made some serious depredations on the stage and the publishers' offices and there is equally little doubt that in many instances this has been of advantage to the literate public. One cannot mention with propriety the names of a number of people, who, skillful enough as artisans in more conventional fields, have shown genius in picture narration.

There is even less propriety in mentioning the names of people who definitely need scolding by someone more authoritative than I. They are people who do not take the motion picture with any real seriousness, I am sure, and their own great capacities in other fields even less seriously. There are two young humorists, one of whom I feel certain would sooner or later—or even sooner—have filled a vast emptiness in contemporary writing left by the late Ring Lardner. There is an aging, kindly gentleman, a novelist, who was time and again on the very edge of a masterpiece, whose latest novel in many years is broadly stamped "Made in Hollywood." There are two dramatists whose successes on the stage should have made them content to mind their cabbages. There are not many, but too many, others whose achievements or promised achievements should never have allowed them to remain in a medium for which they feel only cynicism and, perhaps, a mild curiosity.

Motion pictures are seductive. The lure, after two years of sterility, is enough money to write novels all the rest of one's life with no worry about their sales or popularity. The two years usually stretch out; it is terribly difficult to refuse as salary a weekly sum which would be paid in advances for two or three or even four or five novels.

After two years or even less of dissolves, cuts, fades, irises, montage, tempo, pact, rhythm, zooms, sterilized dialogue and situations, wipes, trucks, sound, scenery, and all the rest, a novelist's style and approaches are almost certain to be impaired and probably ruined. Few, if any, respectable novels have ever come out of Hollywood or from people who had spent much time there. It is probably altogether different with playwrights who are closer to the accustomed brevity and swift action of their usual work, but it seems ruinous for a novelist to condition himself to expression which must be either visible or audible, in which a forty-word speech is garrulous, in which the taboos on words and situations are established by the vehement old-maidery of the country and by the social and national prejudices of half a dozen countries, in which the whole intellectual and dramatic content of a long novel must be sped to consume one hundred and twenty minutes or so, in which opportunities for original characterization or anecdote may be perverted to fit the formula of Standard Gag No. 2047 which has wowed them for years, in which vital dramatic concessions must be made not only to the actors' personalities but to their importance.

There may be temperaments which can survive such discipline for long periods without scars; they must be rare. My three brief visits, twenty-three weeks in all over almost five years, gave me wretched troubles with a bad habit of over-visualization for weeks. If anyone can survive 104 weeks out of 104, I give him the dog, with a diamond-studded collar.

Phil Stong is the author of several novels, including "State Fair" and "The Farmer in the Dell" (a Hollywood story); his latest is "Buckskin Breeches."

The Bowling Green

(*Continued from preceding page*)

ago and thought, by the gods, Horatio, here is something. . . . It comes perilously near to being literature."

Have You Anything to Declare?

Nothing ever gives an editor so much pleasure as printing something that was written with no thought of publication. Going through the confidential readers' reports of a certain literary committee we found the following. Because it describes one of the most genuinely readable of this season's books we got B. D's permission to print his private cry of excitement:—

Have You Anything to Declare? By Maurice Baring. This is one of the most delightful of commonplace-books, in which Baring declares his mental luggage collected from the world's literature. The order is roughly chronological; first his favorite passages from the Greek poets, beginning with Homer; then the Latins; then Dante; and so on. Most of the selections are jewels five lines long, but some run to a page or more. Nearly always he includes some comment, telling why he so loves the extract, and often offering parallels from other literatures. The selections include much Latin, Greek, and French, a good deal of Dante and Goethe, and Heine, and a little Spanish and Russian, the foreign pieces translated. . . .

Altogether, this is a book which (I am happy to say) quite spoiled a half-day's work for me; I could do nothing for a couple of hours but pace my office reading Greek and French half-aloud; and it is a book which makes one feel "Why *don't* we all spend more time with the masterpieces? Why do I ever let a day go by without reading in Homer?" which is a good thing to have done for the mind.

BASIL DAVENPORT.

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VIRGINIA WOOLF

Author of FLUSH: A BIOGRAPHY; of many famous novels, among them MRS. DALLOWAY, ORLANDO, THE WAVES; of books of criticism such as THE COMMON READER, THE SECOND COMMON READER; acknowledged throughout the English-speaking world as one of the most versatile and distinguished of modern writers.

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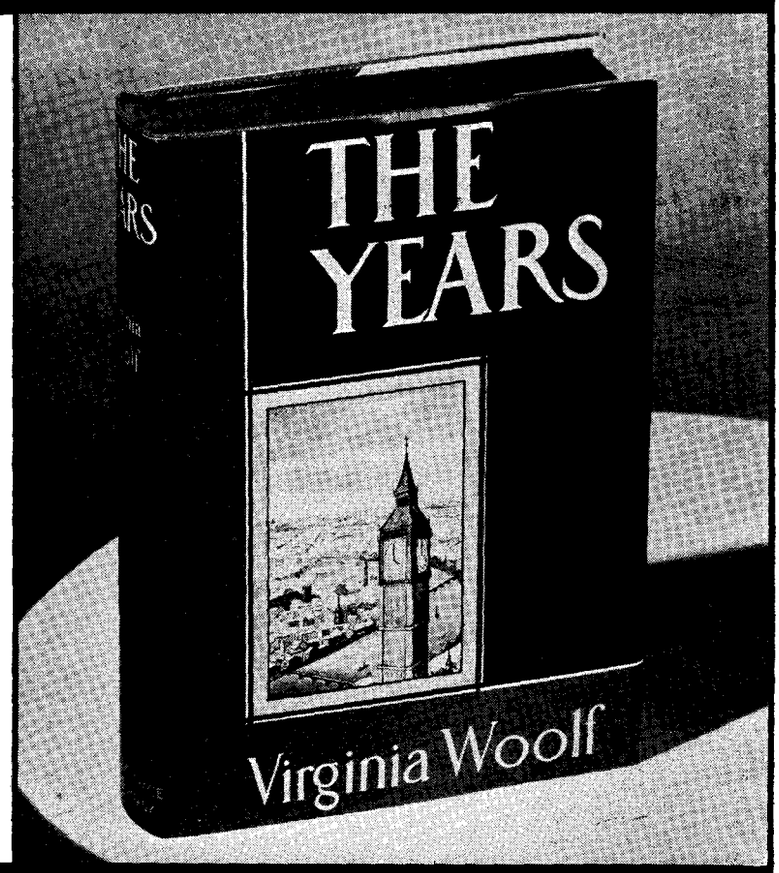

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THE GREYSTONE PRESS
NEW YORK

The PHŒNIX NEST

CONTEMPORARY POETRY: BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

IT seems to me only meet and right this week to take a paragraph or so away from the reviewing of books of poetry and devote them to comment on the recent annual dinner of the Poetry Society of America held in honor, this year, of *Robert Frost.* It proved the most interesting I have ever attended. Though this was due mainly to the presence and speaking and reading of Mr. Frost, the other speakers were well chosen and read excellent poetry. They were *Robert P. Tristram Coffin, John Hall Wheelock, Genevieve Taggard,* and *John Holmes.* In the case of Mr. Coffin it was the state of Maine paying sturdy tribute to New Hampshire and Vermont. Mr. Wheelock is a poet less widely acclaimed at the moment than he will be fifty years from now. I was impressed by his grave and sonorous reading of "Unison," a poem in terza rima where the interlocking rhymes are never obtrusive. But the technical virtues of this poem are not the point. In it a most ancient form becomes the perfect mould for profound poetic intuition. *Genevieve Taggard* has as beautiful a woman's voice for reading as Mr. Wheelock's is resonantly sincere in a man. She read exultantly and lyrically. *John Holmes,* one of our younger poets, acquitted himself well.

Robert Frost explored for us a series of "pairs" or "opposites" in words that he is accustomed to write on the wall of his room. He told us that the opposite of justice is not injustice but mercy. He pointed out that the government of mankind has wavered throughout the ages between the opposites of divine right and consent of the governed. It seemed to me that what he was saying was really a paraphrase of his poem "To a Thinker" in "A Further Range." It is quite plain that Frost will never be a Stalinist. His mistrust is instinctive of cut-and-dried theories for saving the world. The radicals take a very half-baked view of him, and he strikes back shrewdly. There is a great deal of life in the old dog yet! He remarked that he would like to meet the man who had called him a counter-revolutionary so that he could call *him,* in turn, a "bargain-counter revolutionary." Today the Left has small time for anything except saving the world; and the world will never *in* the world be "saved" by such means. Dogmatists and bigots flourish under the new dispensation; and I think Frost struck at the root of the attitude rampant today when he said we could no longer believe in *anybody* being disinterested. If you mentioned what Congressman This or Senator That or Stalin or Roosevelt or anybody else had done or said recently, the inevitable reply was, *"He would!"* The world, in other words, is infected with a deep distrust of human motives. Everything is a racket. This reminded me of Carl Sandburg telling of the newspaper man who leaned upon his desk and drawled, "Well, Carl, how's the poetry racket today?"

Frost said many wise words on April first. He is that greatest of April Foolers, a Sage. We haven't many sages in this country. But this one knows his onions!

Henry Goddard Leach, the toastmaster, introduced Frost by referring to the late *Edwin Arlington Robinson* as the Dean of American poetry and then saying, "The Dean is dead, (*turning to Frost*) long live the Dean!" Which leads me to mention that the Macmillan Company is publishing on April 20th at three dollars a new one-volume edition of Robinson's collected poems which includes all his later work, ending with "King Jasper."

I am irked by lack of space in this department, since so many interesting books of poetry, or about poetry, are arriving at my desk in the spring season. However, I should like to say to those attractive but not altogether guileless ladies who either write or ask me to mention their new books of poems, "because it would mean so much," that I am by nature rather susceptible and also not entirely hard-hearted—but that they really are not playing cricket!

I can heartily recommend, as a modern book *about* poetry, *Margery Mansfield's* "Workers in Fire" (Longmans. $3). It ought to be used for teaching wherever poetry is taught. It is intelligent, written by a good verse-practitioner, the fruit of large experience, eminently practical and sane, and gets right down to cases wherever possible. Everybody interested enough to read this column should get it at once. No, I neither know Miss Mansfield—save that she is Secretary of the Poetry Society of America, to which I do not belong—nor do I get any percentage out of this! But I have tried to teach the writing of verse, and I know a good, helpful volume when I see one. Miss Mansfield, you might say, heckles herself throughout the book, thereby offering lively argument as well as dicta.

When I was teaching last summer at Mills College, California, I heard of certain work *Helen Burwell Chapin* was doing, and last fall her "The Round of the Year," poems translated from the Chinese, were brought out with prologue, epilogue, and calligraphy by the translator, and a preface by *Laurence Binyon* (The Eucalyptus Press: Mills College, Oakland, California. $3). The translator is both a Chinese scholar and poetically gifted. She modestly says that her essays in translation are presented because of "her desire to background her calligraphy, of which she is both proud and ashamed." Admirers of the work of *Arthur Waley, Mrs. Ayscough,* and *Witter Bynner* in this field will be glad to add Miss Chapin's book to their shelf.

"Verses I Like," selected by *Major Bowes,* comes from the Garden City publishing Company, with a foreword by *Theodore Roosevelt,* he whose father once admired the poetry of Edwin Arlington Robinson . . . Oh Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come unto Thee!

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Paraphrase of Gospel

LIFE OF JESUS. By François Mauriac. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by REINHOLD NIEBUHR

IT was natural enough for M. Mauriac to conceive an ambition to write a life of Jesus, for he is a devout Catholic. Furthermore the subject seems to have a strange fascination for men of letters whether they be skeptics or believers. Henri Barbusse wrote a life of Jesus some years ago to prove that Jesus was a revolutionist. Middleton Murry and Papini each wrote one to signalize a religious experience by which he had returned to the Christian faith. A recent attempt by the Russian mystic Merejkowski on the same theme interpreted the gospels in terms of the traditions of Greek mysticism. Emil Ludwig could not resist the temptation to include an interpretation of "The Son of Man" in a biography.

None of these men of letters can be said to have improved his reputation by these efforts. Nor has Mauriac, though much might be expected from him as one of the most gifted of modern French novelists. The cause of this general failure is obvious enough. These men are all amateurs in the field of Biblical criticism. They can therefore not be expected to throw any new light upon the various principles of interpretation which determine the accounts of a life which lies at the center of a historic religion. They are limited to adding imaginative embellishments to the simple gospel stories.

Failure to deal with any of the problems of Biblical criticism compels Mauriac, for instance, to ascribe the same degree of historicity to passages taken from the fourth gospel as to those taken from the synoptics. This will not disturb a devout reader but it does detract from the value of the book in the mind of a critical reader. But the devout reader is served just as well by reading the Johanine passages without adornment. There are some passages of real beauty in Mauriac's account. Furthermore some of the teachings of Jesus are expounded with genuine insight into their paradoxical meaning. His "Life of Jesus" must therefore be regarded as more than ordinarily successful. But it remains on the whole a paraphrase of the gospels; and paraphrases invariably suffer by comparison with the original.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 158)

VILLON—
"THE GREAT TESTAMENT"

Rogues and wastrels, you will still
With the strolling players stray,
But each one must foot the bill,
Plod and hoof it till you're grey.
. . . . . .
Make the ninepins gaily fall;
Money melts, alack-a-day,
Taverns, wenches, get it all!

(*"Ballad of Good Advice." Translation by Lewis Wharton.*)

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Reviewing Reviews

The Case of Mark Benney and "Angels in Undress"

NOW it can be told—and it didn't take long. When Mark Benney's "Angels in Undress" was published by Random House on March 16, Ralph Thompson wrote, in the course of a favorable review in the *New York Times:* "The question of authenticity arises . . . because 'Angels in Undress' seems too good to be true . . . Are we then in the presence of a near-genius who, with little or no formal education, has come out of London slums and gutters via reform schools and prisons to write an extraordinary book? Or is Mark Benney simply an ambitious youth whose crude memoirs have been rearranged and polished by experienced hands? Or is the whole business artifice and the name Mark Benney merely a false front?"

These questions were echoed the next day by Lewis Gannett in the *Herald-Tribune:* "The London publisher of this book, we are assured, 'has letters and documents authenticating the author's identity and every statement.' That they prove the existence of a real 'Mark Benney' and of his prison record must be accepted; but it would require more than documents to convince me of the psychological reality of the sophisticated literary personality here presented. But what constitutes authenticity? How much is it legitimate for a 'ghost' to dress up the story told by an imperfectly articulate personality?"

So Random House cabled to England for the documents in the case, and here they are. The conductor of this Department has copies of three letters written from prisons by the author of "Angels in Undress" to his English publisher, Peter Davies. We have seen and read the originals of these letters, written on official prison stationery in the handwriting of the author and signed with his real name, which is H. E. Degras. We also have a long letter written to Bennett Cerf by Peter Davies, describing his relations with Degras and the history of "Angels in Undress." Two of the letters from Degras are short, but one is very long, written in the same style—not only literate, but positively distinguished and brilliant—as his book. Not only that; this letter, written Sept. 16, 1935, contains a long passage which appears almost verbatim in "Angels in Undress."

We quote first from Mr. Davies's letter, written from London March 18, 1937.

"There is not the least question that Mark Benney (pen-name of H. E. Degras) wrote every word of his book, and had no help from anyone. I am on close personal terms with him and know this to be the case. By way of proof I enclose three letters from him.

"The first, dated November 22nd, 1933, is the first communication I ever had from him, in answer to a letter I wrote him c/o *The Spectator,* in which periodical I had read an admirable article signed H. E. Degras, and called 'The Burglar's Urge.' As you see, he had got caught again in the interval, and wrote from Wandsworth Prison.

"The second (September 9th, 1935) is from Chelmsford Prison, whither he had been transferred, and it contains, as you will see, a long passage which is printed verbatim at the beginning of 'Low Company' [English title of 'Angels in Undress.']

"The third (April 4th, 1936) was written shortly before his release. . . .

"As a matter of fact, about a third of 'Low Company' is taken verbatim from the letters which he wrote to me from time to time during his term of imprisonment."

The first letter from Degras to Davies, dated November 22, 1933, is brief, and we quote in full:

"I have received your letter, as you will gather from the stationery, under conditions which forbid any immediate business relationship between us. And I regret to say that these conditions will obtain until the spring of 1936. (Unless my appeal for a reduction of sentence is more successful than I dare hope.)

"The burglar's urge was again too strong for me.

"If, however, your interest in my work survives the two and a quarter years' hiatus, I will give you the first refusal of a 90,000 word autobiography, written in the third pers. and ensure complete candour, which traces the growth of a criminal 'anschauung' with what insight and subtlety I am capable of. It has not yet been submitted to anyone.

"Of this more in 1936. Meanwhile it is almost unnecessary to express my regrets of the unsatisfactory results of your inquiry."

Degras's second letter, dated 16th Sept. 1935, is too long to quote here in full, and in any case, you can find much of it, with only minor changes, in the opening pages of "Angels in Undress." The letter runs in part as follows:

"Crime, then, for the purposes of my self-analysis, is spiritual indolence. It is the failure to choose intelligently between the present good and the remote better. In this sense my life has been all crime, for I've seldom even made the effort of choice. If my criminal history has any theme, it is in my coming gradually to identify the particular with the general, realizing myself against a cosmic background and finding a world's case in my own conflict of motives. This is not solution or resolution; but it gives dignity to one's position and a new importance to the issues.

"Dignity Importance . . . and in the face of that I must admit that in a well-ordered world I should never have been born. Either Mother's education would have fortified her against the allurements of the slick young Jewish book-maker who gave me his name but not his patronymic; or a wider knowledge of contraceptives would have averted the evil."

The third letter from Degras to Davies contains a noteworthy paragraph:

"Have you been approached by authoritative bodies charged with regulating my 'future welfare'? If so I must disclaim all responsibility for the impertinence. I was induced to show a letter of yours to a representative of the Central Association, first to persuade him that my future welfare could be better established with the aid of a type-writer than with a set of picks and shovels, and secondly to protect myself from possible infringements of ticket-of-leave requirements. But I made it very explicit that my relations with you had already too much strayed from the strictly business standpoint, and that I didn't want you involved and inconvenienced in the sordid details of discharge. If, in spite of this, you have been approached, I can only apologize for other people's lack of faith."

Davies says that Mark Benney has met H. G. Wells, Julian Huxley, J. C. Squire, and Bertrand Russell; he has broadcast from the B. B. C.; and he has been chief guest at one of Foyle's literary luncheons, where, incidentally, the photograph was taken which was radioed to the U. S. and printed on the cover of the March 20 issue of *The Saturday Review.* "In a word," concludes Davies, "the only thing that is false about him is the name under which he writes. Mark Benney (= H. E. Degras), and no one else, is the author of 'Low Company.'"

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The New Books

Fiction

ST. GEORGE OF WELDON. By Robert Rylee. Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.50.

Mr. Rylee's second book goes beyond his "Deep Dark River" in many ways while falling short in others. Like that first novel, a tale of the South, it begins in 1929, with the death by drowning—one does not here know whether by accident or suicide—of a man in his early thirties. This opening section is brilliantly written, bringing swift realization of the emotional tensions and cross-currents from which death brought him escape. The next section goes back to St. George's earliest recollections, in 1900, showing him the youngest child among three—one brother an imbecile, one of such temperament as sets God comfortably in his heaven and the world permanently at seven. The parents are a millionaire and his wife who live in complete disharmony. Then the book proceeds chronologically until 1929 is reached again. One sees the loneliness and weakness of the boy, his abortive attempts at achieving a satisfying philosophy, then college days, the World War, love affairs consummated in the flesh but always with reservations of the spirit, a perpetual feeling of inadequacy which prevents that giving completely of himself to any relationship which could have made him whole.

Though the book focuses on personal struggles, occasional paragraphs show unbiased glimpses of sociological conditions. It is good, and worth anyone's reading. If the author's honesty in uncovering and facing the weaknesses and discrepancies of human beings and their relationships could have been coupled with a style not merely competent but transmuting, the book would have been truly exceptional. As it is, Robert Rylee emerges as one of the few published writers whose future books must not be overlooked in the continuing search for the great Southern novel.

P. S.

THE GODS ARRIVE. By Grant Lewi. Lippincott. 1937. $2.50.

Flogging a dead donkey is dangerous; for it inevitably arouses doubts of the flogger. The first half of this book is given over to flogging the half-god Self-expression, with strokes so vigorous and heavy that the reader wonders whether an author who follows the fashion of the moment with so little humor or measure might not have been a Bohemian or even an expatriate in the days before the donkey died.

Similarly, to incorporate into a novel verbatim actual experiences is difficult; for the ring of autobiography is far from being the ring of truth or life. And the second half of the book reports experiences in a modern department store so exhaustively that one feels Mr. Lewi has lived through them, but not realized, not digested them.

Out of these two disparate halves, united only by the character of the hero, Mr. Lewi has not been able to construct a novel; but rather a rambling commentary on our times, often agreeable and readable, oftener tedious and obvious. Especially in the second half, when the true gods, Responsibility and Discipline, have arrived, he seems to have lost interest in their effect on his hero, carried away by his passion to dilate on merchandising problems.

Karl Horton was a young man of education and breeding, married to Jerry, who was too good for him. He has two problems to solve before he could be altogether an adult: one was, unaided, to find his feet in the economic world; and this he did—though Mr. Lewi is too honest not to show us that it helps a lot to be a Horton of Albany, and thus to know how to eat dirt with the right appearance of independence, and crook the knee without crooking the little finger. Karl's

(*Continued on page* 21)

He entered Mecca disguised as a Moslem dervish . . . was the first white man to penetrate the holy Abyssinian city of Harar . . . discovered the true source of the Nile . . . spoke 25 European and Oriental languages and dialects . . . was one of the most audacious explorers and adventurers England ever produced.

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Cellini

THE LIFE OF BENVENUTO CELLINI, written by Himself. New York: Limited Editions Club. 1937.

IF Benvenuto Cellini was one of the most conceited of writers—and a rereading of the immortal autobiography confirms one's belief that he was—his pride would suffer no diminution if he happened to see this volume. If it lacks something of the exuberance of his silver cups, or of his robust nature, that is because New York and Verona in 1937 are not Florence of the Quattrocento; but even Cellini's metallic craftsmanship hardly exceeds in meticulousness the typographic carefulness of Hans Marderstieg, whose Officina Bodoni did the printing of this volume.

It is a large volume, with ample margins, and the type set in two columns. It seems fitting that the type used in the book should be the fine and readable face named for that Messer Pietro Bembo whose hand Cellini kissed at Padua, and for whom he designed a medal. For Cellini, the size of the book is warranted—he was not piccolo.

What also, I fancy, would charm Cellini, are the some four hundred drawings illustrative of the text, done by Fritz Kredel, a German whose work is well known to those familiar with the Offenbach workshop. They are mostly single-column in width, lithographed in two colors. Somewhat small in scale for the large page, they are executed with spirit and gusto.

The text used in this edition is that of Symonds; there is an introduction by Thomas Craven; and (*mirabile dictu*) an index. The binding is in heavy cloth, with a diaper pattern of lion-and-fleur-de-lis. It is a brave and handsome book, worthy of the story.

All About Paper

A DICTIONARY OF PAPER AND PAPER-MAKING TERMS. By E. J. Labarre. Amsterdam: Swets & Zeitlinger. 1937. 10.70 *guilders.*

This first standard paper dictionary will be an indispensable tool for anyone seeking information about paper in general, whether on the subject of its history, the meaning of its terms, or the character of different sorts of paper. No such general work has hitherto existed, and the deficiency has been a marked one.

The description of the book is well set forth on the title page: "with equivalents in French, German, Dutch, Italian. An experiment in technical lexicography, with a historical study on Paper, and an Introduction." Off to such a start, one expects a good deal—and finds it. To be sure, my first query, "Dutch Charcoal," a fairly common name for a certain kind of paper, remains unanswered by the Dictionary; but I have so far failed to ask about any other word which is not defined, explained with cross references, and supplied with four equivalent words in other languages. I cannot be sure that the technical definitions accord always with American practice, but certainly the terms familiar to both printer and paper maker could not be better explained.

The main dictionary is in English: indexes in the other four languages make the definitions instantly available, and supplement the foreign-word definitions under each English subject entry.

A recondite foreword on the methods and problems of the compiler is followed by several short chapters on the history of paper making, and on the process, materials, and forms of the manufactured product. All this is thoroughly documented, and supported by a long list of authorities consulted.

Finally there are forty-five samples of paper and paper materials.

I have seldom had so much satisfaction in recommending a cyclopedic work as I take in this case. The meticulous completeness of the work, its logical arrangement, and its clear presentation, its handy format and general aspect of accuracy, make it an outstanding achievement. One can easily believe, as Major Clapperton says in his Foreword, that "an extraordinary amount of time and care have been given to every aspect of it." And the best of it is that it so adequately fills a real need in the literature of paper and paper making.

Shorter Notes

From *Philip Duschnes* come two exceptional catalogues—one of Bruce Rogers items, and one of an unusual offering of books relating to the graphic arts. "Two Centuries of Bruce Rogers" is a bit of a misnomer for a sales catalogue of some 216 items, but the attractiveness of the items, of the arrangement of the catalogue, and of its printing make it one of the best we have seen for a long time. . . . The list of books on the graphic arts contains a number of titles well worth while to any student of printing. Any such list has been a rarity of late, and this one is all the more welcome. . . . Mr. Duschnes's shop has come to be widely known as a repository of books on the graphic arts and for "press" books.

If Muscatine, Iowa, is going to produce nicely printed little books like Althea Bass's "Young Inquirer" (Carroll D. Coleman, The Prairie Press, 225 copies at $2), hand-set in good type and printed on attractive paper, it will have a good effect. Good printing—interesting printing—ought to come out of small printing offices. It has this time.

An unusual book is promised by the Press of the Woolly Whale, 415 Lexington Ave., New York, in "War Cards," an illustrated treatise on nearly a hundred decks of playing cards issued in war time in the various nations.

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The New Books

(*Continued from page* 19)

other problem is to make himself a satisfactory husband and father, but of that adjustment Mr. Lewi gives us scarcely a glimpse.

Mr. Lewi is an earnest and intelligent writer; but his characters wage unequal war with his theses, and they lack precision and originality.

K. S.

NORTHLAND FOOTPRINTS. By Kenneth Conibear. Scribners. 1937. $2.50.

This is another addition to the now vast library of animal fiction, and distinctly of the upper grade. It is a story of the lives of all the animals on Little Bent Tree Lake in the far northwest of Canada, concluding with the arrival of man. The animals are named and made personal but are not sentimentalized, and it is very clear that much close first-hand observation has gone into the study before the narrative began. The moose, the wolverine, the beaver, the jay, and the muskrat are the chief actors in this drama.

H. S. C.

History

LA PRACTICA DELLA MERCATURA. By Francesco Balducci Pegolotti. Edited by Allen Evans. Cambridge, Mass.: The Medieval Academy of America.

About 1340, a prominent Florentine business man, a trusted executive of the great company of the Bardi, international traders and bankers, wrote a sort of manual of commercial geography for his countrymen. In it he set down the principal products of all the countries known to him, the trade routes by which they passed, the tolls and tariffs on the way, and the best markets for each. It was a practical book, full of tables of weights and measures, currencies and moneys of account, of advice about how to avoid short weight and where officials could be bribed. Because it was entirely matter of fact, written for business men by a business man from his own experience and the best sources he could find, it is today more fascinating to scholars than almost all the scholarly geographies of the time put together, and invaluable to medievalists and economic historians.

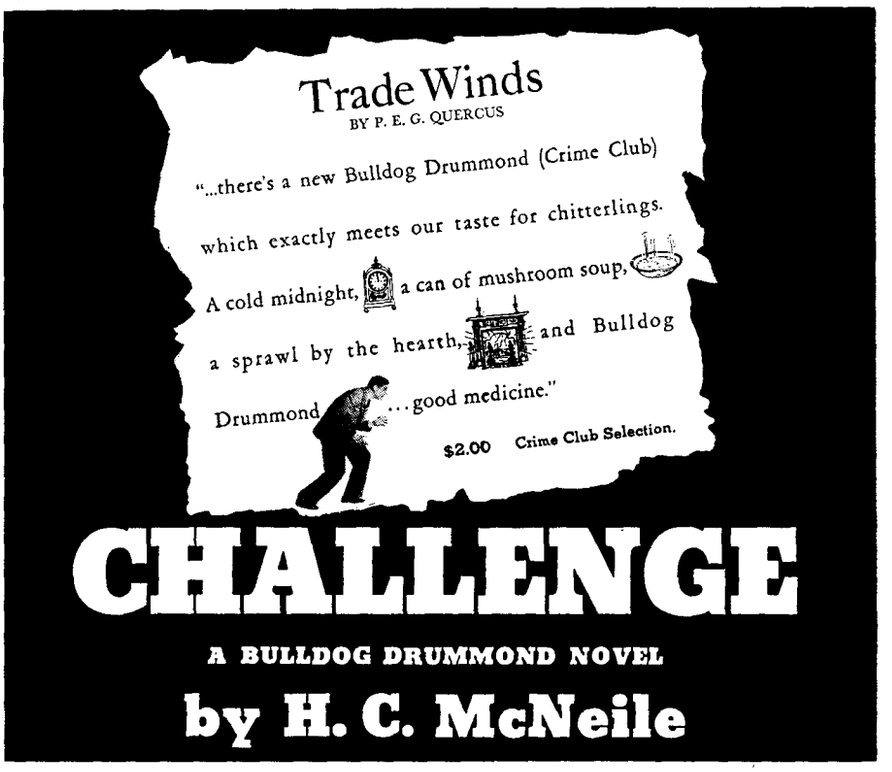
Nevertheless Pegolotti's book has been, for a long time, more talked about than read, because it existed, except for a manuscript in Florence, only in one scarce eighteenth century printing. It is now available in a handsome new edition, prepared directly from the manuscript, with most of the difficulties in the old text cleared up forever, with a readable and informative introduction, and with copious notes and glossaries, more learned, no doubt, than most of us will ever know enough to appreciate. Such a publication does the study of history more service than a hundred text books. This edition will be indispensable, henceforth, to every historical and economic library, and of great interest to philologists and geographers as well. There may even be some laymen who will want to know what the English monasteries had to sell, and what could be bought in Cyprus and Armenia, and what stations a man might find on the journey to Cathay.

G. M.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
A CASE FOR THREE DETECTIVES *Leo Bruce* (Stokes: $2.)	Lord Plimsoll, Mons. Picot, and Mgr. Smith all "solve" murder of English woman but burly Segt. Beef gets there first.	Capital, if sometimes strained, burlesque of three famous fictional sleuths, and a top-notch puzzler in its own right.	Excellent
THE BONFIRE MURDER *T. Arthur Plummer* (Macaulay: $2.)	Was it the English Mayor or his twin whose murdered body dangled in a Guy Fawkes pyre?	Ancient plot extremely well handled, with civic corruption and marital peccadilloes thrown in for good measure.	Baffler
THE GIRL IN BLACK VELVET *Louis De Jean* (Macaulay: $2.)	Faithful lover of murdered small town gal who went wrong chucks her killer to the crocodiles.	Super-heated yarn of illicit peshion and underworld intrigue with lurid, tropical interludes.	Tripe
DIAMONDS OF DEATH *Wallace Jackson* (Hopkins: $2.)	Master criminal who leaves green ace of diamonds as deadly "calling card" finally quenched by ebullient Inspectors Clancy and Straker.	Gang stuff, English model, with torture, profuse gun-play, astonishingly indecisive mobsters and ending that explodes over entire landscape.	10-20-30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CHALLENGE
A BULLDOG DRUMMOND NOVEL
by H. C. McNeile

SAID

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction in the issue of April 3rd

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
HARNESS BULL *Leslie White* (Harcourt, Brace: $2.)	Two days and a night in a city detective chief's life and what they bring to light.	About as real, rough, and raw a book as we've had on the way run-of-the-mill crimes are solved.	Knock-out!

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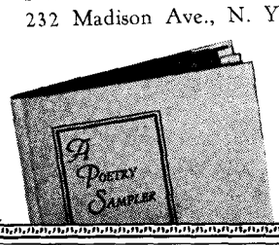

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PH.D. GOWN and Columbia hood wanted. Box 917-B.

WANTED—A new interest. Now in Chicago via New York out of Georgia (But Ah've lost mah Southern accent). Box 918-B.

ALERT, interested in places and people, 26. Want position traveling companion, governess, or tutor for summer. Box 919-B.

NEW ENGLAND SPINSTER, celebrating happily thirtieth birthday and reveling in living in the real country and working several days a week in town, would enjoy meeting just a few people who find life a game well worth the playing, and believe the enjoyment of Myra Hess, hunter trials and Charles Lamb not too incongruous a combination. Box 920-B.

OFFICE ASSISTANT — press representative: Man, 28, college training, newspaper-clerical experience, wants position in publishing or allied field. Box 921-B.

FIVE DOLLARS for copy—in good condition. "Leschetizky As I Knew Him." Box 922-B.

CORRESPONDENTS imagine that "Paediculi" hints that professors of English, who teach that "Shake-speare" was born in Stratford, are lousy. Perish the thought! Why should professors be lousy when fine combs, Tincture of Larkspur, and Oil of Bergamot are attainable? Perpend. "Paediculi" derives from "Paedagogi" and "Meticulosus"; and lexicographically means: "timid professors." What else could one term something which refuses to defend what it teaches? George Frisbee.

WANTED: Women with wide acquaintance to contact women's clubs in western states by mail. The Literary Service Councils, 11 W. 42nd St., Suite 1062, New York City.

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UPROOTED from fertile Midwest transplanted to the forbidding shore of the Hudson. April shower of letters may flower. He Man.

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Double-Crostics: No. 159

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

	1-O		2-N	3-U	4-A	5-B		6-S	7-W		8-B	9-L		10-T	11-C	12-F
13-E	14-K		15-C		16-S	17-H	18-U		19-L	20-I	21-J	22-O		23-G	24-R	
25-H	26-I	27-R	28-M	29-Z		30-N	31-B	32-H	33-E	34-W		35-M	36-O	37-W		38-K
39-I	40-D	41-R	42-V	43-B	44-W	45-H	46-C	47-T	48-M		49-U	50-W		51-V	52-N	
53-F	54-J		55-H	56-A	57-V		58-Z	59-Y	60-L	61-D	62-M	63-P	64-W	65-U	66-E	67-N
	68-Q	69-K	70-H	71-R	72-N		73-O	74-U		75-V	76-H	77-J		78-Y	79-T	80-D
81-K	82-O	83-E		84-H	85-L		86-O	87-I	88-U		89-X	90-W	91-Y	92-O	93-S	94-P
95-J	96-C	97-M		98-D	99-J	100-Q	101-B	102-Z	103-J		104-T	105-M	106-N	107-P	108-B	
109-Y	110-G	111-L		112-J	113-S	114-O		115-K	116-M	117-P	118-C	119-N	120-W		121-I	122-E
123-D	124-L		125-E	126-D	127-W	128-L		129-P	130-R	131-F	132-O	133-K	134-R		135-T	136-X
137-D	138-Q		139-A	140-G		141-C	142-A		143-L	144-K		145-A	146-I	147-H	148-Q	
149-X	150-L	151-G	152-P		153-U	154-X	155-R	156-T		157-Y	158-C	159-L	160-R	161-J	162-V	

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's International Dictionary.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 17 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. One of the Hindu Trimurti.

B. Disfiguring of the body.

C. Play by Shaw.

D. Slyly spiteful.

E. Worsted yarn slackly twisted.

F. Dog hero of story by Dr. John Brown.

G. Holy Roman Emperor (962-973).

H. One of the Erinyes.

I. Clever (Fr.).

J. Edible.

K. Stone from which hieroglyphics were deciphered.

L. Russian composer (1882-).

M. Upbraided.

N. Sobriquet of a Cooper hero.

O. Blanched.

P. Fashionable.

Q. Admits.

R. Confutation.

S. Said to have lived 905 years (Bib.).

T. Putrified.

U. Famous London prison razed in 1902.

V. Irish patriot (1778-1803).

W. English poet (1774-1763).

X. Display.

Y. To the rear of (naut.).

Z. An affirmative.

WORDS

142 56 139 4 145

8 101 108 31 5 43

118 15 96 158 141 46 11

40 98 80 61 137 123 126

33 66 122 125 83 13

131 53 12

110 140 151 23

55 32 147 84 25 76 70 45 17

87 26 121 20 146 39

77 103 161 112 99 95 21 54

38 144 115 14 81 69 133

85 124 111 60 159 150 128 143 19 9

116 35 62 97 28 105 48

2 106 30 119 52 67 72

132 86 1 73 82 36 92 114 22

94 63 107 117 129 152

148 100 138 68

134 160 27 130 71 41 155 24

93 16 6 113

104 79 10 135 47 156

74 88 18 153 3 49 65

57 51 42 162 75

120 34 44 7 37 90 50 64 127

89 136 154 149

157 78 91 109 59

102 29 58

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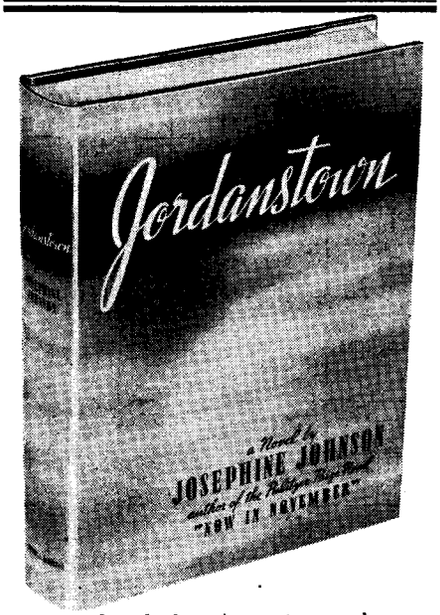

. . . a book for America to be proud of . . ."

Thus writes the reviewer of *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* in one of the first tributes to come in on JOSEPHINE JOHNSON'S new novel, *Jordanstown.*

It is a timely book, one which deals with the forces which are changing America today. Jordanstown is a small industrial town like hundreds of actual towns scattered throughout the country, its inhabitants are representative of the countless thousands engaged in the struggle between the haves and the have-nots.

At the end of the book, *Jordanstown's* chief character voices the credo which is the book's keynote:

"I believe still in the decency of men and their courage. I believe that suffering is a perversion and not a necessity. I believe that no man walks utterly alone, and that no man should have power wilfully to give or to refuse the heritage of life to another. I believe that this is the only sanity, and not a chimera of the mind, or the clown-juggling of a dream. I believe that there are enough of all things for every man and we should not give up or be quiet. We shall not stop talking and give you peace. We shall go on planning and protesting and building until we see the earth again a great altar where the fruit and grain wait as communion for all men."

Jordanstown is a novel which thousands are discovering to be a distinguished successor to *Now In November,* MISS JOHNSON'S first novel, which won The Pulitzer Prize as the best novel of 1935.

—ESSANDESS

Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

WILLIAM EDWIN RUDGE'S SONS, 225 Varick Street, have reprinted in booklet form the brief sketch of their father (1876-1931) which appeared in *P.M.*, a professional monthly of the printing arts. It is interesting to learn that W. E. R.'s first experience was at the age of eleven, devilling in a little print shop where the *Coal Trade Journal* was the sustaining customer. From that to the great 18-volume set of the *Boswell Papers* was the measure of an extraordinary career, loyally remembered by many friends.

☞We hear the pleasantest reports of the Centennial Dinner given by Little, Brown and Company in Boston to mark a century of publishing. ☞A distinguished gathering of writers, publishers and critics attended; the particular star of the occasion was Mr. E. Phillips Oppenheim, the old master of glamorous intrigue, deception and crime-in-evening-dress. ☞Mr. Alfred McIntyre, head of the house, introduced the toastmaster (our colleague Mr. Christopher Morley) who took warning from the menu where what New York calls breast of guinea hen was listed (with Brahmin reticence) as supreme of guinea hen, and strove to accommodate his introductions to Bostonian decorum. ☞There was a dangerous moment, when Mr. Walter Edmonds was quoted as saying that his favorite amusement is "playing around with an axe," and the toastmaster begged him to remember the Borden case. ☞Mr. Whitney Darrow, speaking for a group of 19 fellow-publishers, presented L. B. and Co. with a beautiful silver punch-bowl, suitably engraved. This was filled with champagne and tilted along the handsome faces of the High Table; causing some envy in the rest of the room. ☞Witty and tributary speakers were Claude Fuess, Odell Shepard, Sylvia Thompson, Edward A. Weeks, Jr., Samuel Eliot Morison, and Dumas Malone. The latter was not reached until well beyond midnight; as the toastmaster feelingly said, Malone at last. It was a memorable event. The senior author present was Professor Eugene Wambaugh whose legal classic on *The Study of Cases* was published by L. B. in 1892. ☞The largest seller present was undoubtedly Mr. Thornton Burgess whose juveniles have totalled 4,350,000.

☞John H. Regan, known to thousands of ocean travellers, was for many years Ship News Reporter for the N. Y. City News Association. Johnny, boarding liners at Quarantine, has probably interviewed more strangely assorted humans than any reporter of his time. But through those years of hard and hurried service his private hobby was collecting his remarkable library of Napoleoniana. His enthusiasm was such that once, on the modest resources of a newspaper reporter, he outbid the great Dr. Rosenbach for a coveted item. Johnny went to the auction with $150, his total available surplus. Dr. R., quite unaware of the little drama, stopped bidding at $149. Another of his treasures is an 1816 volume bearing F. D. R.'s autograph, which he picked up at Mendoza's.

☞But Mr. Regan has had to go home to his native Texas, for reasons of health, and his treasured collection is to be sold. A group of newspaper friends have volunteered to arrange the sale. Libraries, collectors, or anyone else interested can get information from M. Thérèse Bonney, 121 Madison Ave., N. Y. City (Murray Hill 4-6562).

☞We were delighted to receive, from Terence Holliday, a copy of a charming little bibelot, *David of Cambridge,* containing tributes to the famous second-hand bookseller (Gustave David, 1860-1936) whose stall in the Market Place in Cambridge, England, became a rallying place for many university generations. The affectionate homages from T. R. Glover, Quiller-Couch, S. C. Roberts, etc. —and a portrait by Sir William Nicholson—form a true memorabilium of the noblest of trades, the secundumanual.

☞Columbia University Press's jovial young weekly *The Pleasures of Publishing* has learned a deep truth long familiar to oldtimers. "Almost no one," it cries, "has the slightest qualm about writing a begging letter to a publisher. Writers of such letters invariably assume (a) that all publishers are immensely wealthy; (b) that all publishers are easy marks; and (c) that the writer is doing the publisher a favor in allowing him to give the writer a free copy of a book."

☞W. R. B., of the Phoenix Nest, returning from an extensive lecture trip in the Middling West, reports his surprise and pleasure in finding a bust of Walt Whitman (done by Ulbert Janssen of Stuttgart) in the lobby of the Bismarck Hotel in Chicago. ☞W. R. B. came upon it by accident, on his way to the hotel's Bierstube. ☞Buried in an unlikely place, the annual News Bulletin of the austere National Institute of Arts and Letters, is an interesting publishing story. Harry Stillwell Edwards, newspaper writer in Atlanta, is speaking of his little book *Eneas Africanus.* He says "It has had increasing sales for the seventeen years of its life and now is in sudden demand in every state of the Union, owing largely to its reprint in condensed form by *The Reader's Digest.* No accurate record of copies issued has been kept, but they will approximate thirteen or fourteen hundred thousands.

"*Eneas Africanus* was offered to several magazines and declined. One of these was the largest weekly of its times. The editor called it 'monotonous.' One of the largest publishing houses in the country,—out on Long Island,—wrote that its five readers could find nothing in it to justify publication.

"But what I consider the most remarkable fact in connection with the story is that no advertisement of it has ever been put into any newspaper or magazine. Like Topsy it just grew.

"Corporations and individuals have bought the story by the thousands. One cigar company sent out 23,000 copies as gifts to large customers."

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